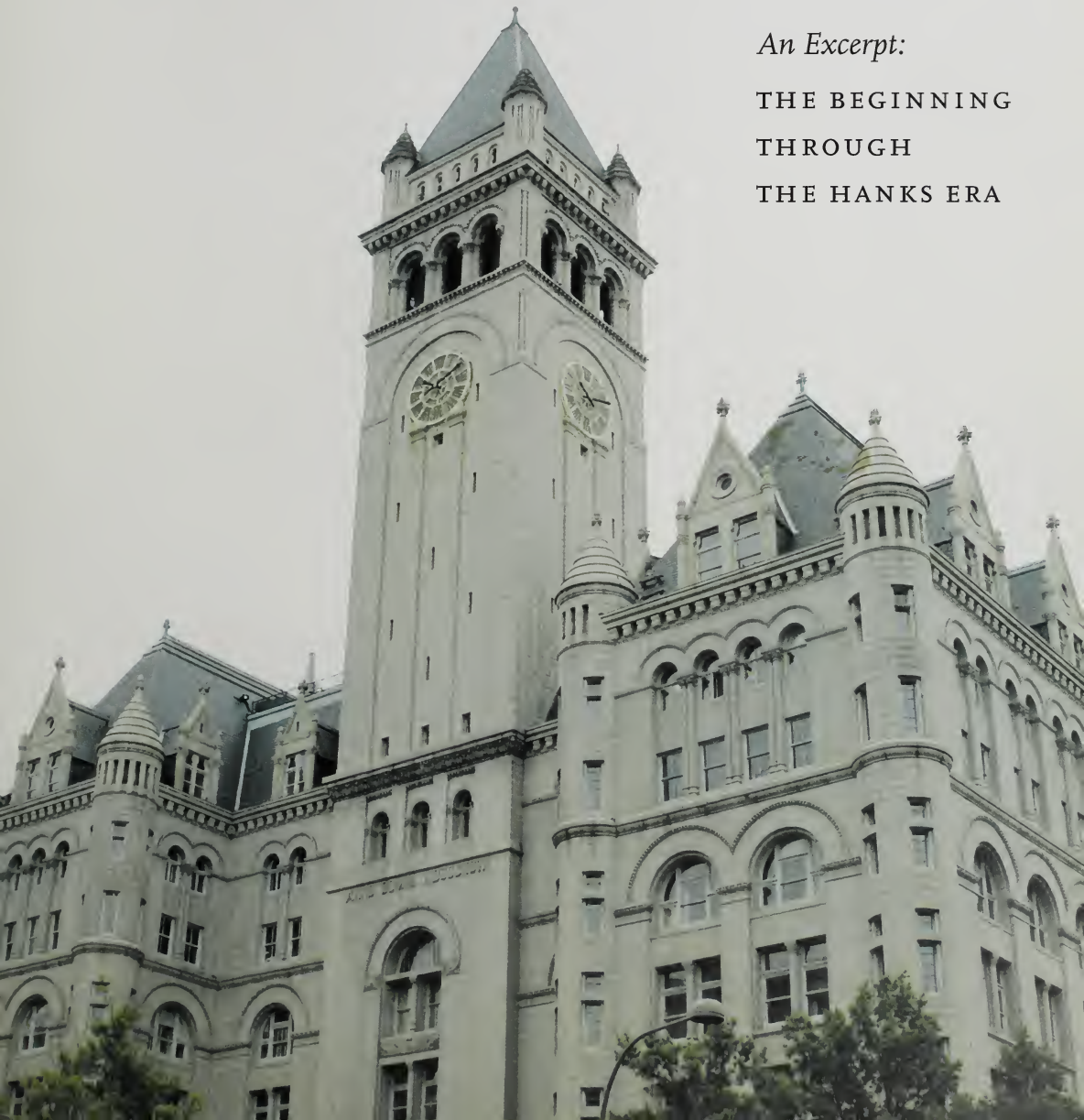
NATIONAL ENDOWMENT *for the* ARTS

A BRIEF HISTORY 1965–2006

An Excerpt:

THE BEGINNING
THROUGH
THE HANKS ERA



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THE BEGINNING THROUGH THE HANKS ERA

"The arts and sciences are essential to the prosperity of the state and to the ornament and happiness of human life. They have a primary claim to the encouragement of every lover of his country and mankind."

George Washington to Rev. Joseph Willard

"I must study politics and war, that our sons may have liberty to study mathematics and philosophy. Our sons ought to study mathematics and philosophy, geography, natural history and naval architecture, navigation, commerce and agriculture in order to give their children a right to study painting, poetry, music, architecture, statuary, tapestry and porcelain."

John Adams to his wife Abigail Adams

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Preface

WELCOME TO THIS celebratory symposium of the 40th anniversary of the National Endowment for the Arts. We hope you'll find these three days an informative, enlightening, and enlivening opportunity to understand the enormous effect the Arts Endowment has had on America's artists, arts organizations, and audiences over the past four decades.

At the end of this anniversary year, we will be publishing a brief history of the NEA that will look at the genesis and genius of a government agency created solely to foster creativity and bring the best of the arts to all Americans. The story of the birth and growth of the Arts Endowment is uniquely American and has shaped artistic endeavors in our communities for nearly half a century.

The following is an excerpt of the opening chapters of our manuscript, which is still a work in progress.

(Photo by Vance Jacobs)

Dana Gioia

Dana Gioia
Chairman
National Endowment for the Arts

Introduction

THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS—the NEA—is a unique agency in the panoply of federal institutions. Created by the Congress of the United States and President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1965, the NEA was not intended to solve a problem, but rather to embody a hope. Its mandate was not international; it was not founded to promote American culture overseas, or to otherwise improve America's global image. The NEA was established to nurture American creativity, to elevate the nation's culture, and to sustain and preserve the country's many artistic traditions. The Endowment's mission would be to spread this artistic bounty throughout the land, from the dense and hectic streets of our largest cities to the vast rural spaces so that every citizen may enjoy the great legacy of American art.

In two aspects, the Arts Endowment differs greatly from the prior federal programs with which historians have most often compared it, the Federal Arts Project and Federal Writers' Project, maintained during the Great Depression by the administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt. The New Deal programs provided jobless artists and writers with employment—that is, it assisted in the resolution of a national economic crisis. In many instances the Federal Arts Project and similar efforts associated with it, such as the photographic work of the Farm Security Administration, were also intended to convey President Roosevelt's political messages about how the nation would recover from economic devastation.

By contrast, the Arts Endowment was created neither to provide support for the unemployed nor to deliver a political message. The idealistic optimism expressed at the birth of the NEA was very different from the hope for restoration of American

prosperity during the Depression. In the NEA's case, hope bore no connection to despair; it was a pure function of the exaltation of the spirit.

The distinctive origins of the federal arts programs of the New Deal and of the National Endowment for the Arts were reflected in the kinds of art with which each was associated. The New Deal programs *produced* art, especially in the visual fields—murals and other paintings in a recognized style, with a similar sensibility in some, but not all, of the photographic work it subsidized. A school of "WPA art" (WPA—Works Progress Administration) thus became a major phenomenon of the New Deal era, but there was not and must not be an "NEA style" of art. Paralleling the political mission of WPA art in supporting New Deal programs, such works also reflected a commitment on the part of many artists in that epoch to collectivist values and the promotion of government in society. But neither the Arts Endowment nor American artists who worked with the agency over the past 40 years have sought to revive such a sensibility.

A mural created by the Brandywine River School artists in the 1930s as part of the Works Progress Administration (WPA). The mural hangs in the John Bassett Moore School in Smyrna, Delaware. (Photo courtesy of Smyrna School District)

Nevertheless, the history of the NEA also has elements in common with that of New Deal programs for artists and writers. The first and most obvious is that both sought to bring culture to the people. The second is that both represent irreplaceable records of the intellectual and ideological challenges that America underwent during the progress of their activities. During the New Deal, the photographic scrutiny of Walker Evans, Dorothea Lange, Ben Shahn, and others subsidized in federal arts programs did not turn away from the drama of America struggling to rise from economic deprivation. Similarly, to comprehend America over the past 40 years, we will examine a wide range of works supported by the NEA, as well as the occasional controversies that have disrupted its mission. Few federal agencies can offer the public, or historians to come, so thorough and eloquent a record of American cultural development as the NEA has done.

Pablo Casals performs for President John F. Kennedy, Puerto Rican Governor Muñoz Marín, and other distinguished guests in the East Room of the White House, November 13, 1961. (Photo by Robert Knudsen, White House/John Fitzgerald Kennedy Library)

CHAPTER I

Hope and Inspiration

WITH THE ELECTION of President John F. Kennedy in 1960, enthusiasm for America as a nation dedicated to the arts seemed poised to become a widespread movement. A harbinger of this new energy in the arts had come near the close of the Eisenhower administration: Poet Carl Sandburg and actor Fredric March addressed a Joint Session of Congress to mark the 150th anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln on February 12, 1959.

At President Kennedy's inaugural, his administration's commitment to creativity was symbolized by Robert Frost reciting a poem from the ceremonial dais. Though he was unfortunately inaudible to many of those present because of gusty winds, the image was captured on television and stirred the imagination of the public. In addition, the modernist painters Franz Kline and Mark Rothko, whose works were anything but conventional, attended the historic event.

Another grand moment associated with President Kennedy's tragically shortened term was his 1961 invitation to Pablo Casals to perform at the White House. The Casals event was notable in a number of ways emphasized by President Kennedy in his opening remarks. First, it was intended not only as an homage to Casals, but to Puerto Rico and its reforming governor, Luis Muñoz Marín; second, President Kennedy pointed out that Casals, who was 84 when he performed in 1961, had also played in the White House for President Theodore Roosevelt, in 1904! Finally, President Kennedy alluded to Casals's refusal to return to his native Catalonia, which was then under the dictatorship of Francisco Franco. The President closed his remarks with the words, "an artist must be a free man."

At the end of 1961, President Kennedy further expressed his commitment to the arts when he sent his Labor Secretary, Arthur J. Goldberg, to settle a pay dispute between the Metropolitan Opera in New York and the American Federation of Musicians. On announcing the resolution of the conflict, Goldberg called for government subsidies to the performing arts, proposing further that business join with labor in support of the arts.

Another high point in the intellectual history of the Kennedy administration involved the French minister for culture, André Malraux. A flamboyant and venturesome cultural figure across two generations, Malraux had played host to the Kennedys when they visited France in 1961. The following year, Malraux came to Washington, where First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy returned the favor. A White House dinner for the French minister included performances by the violinist Isaac Stern, pianist Eugene Istomin, and cellist Leonard Rose. During his visit, Mrs. Kennedy asked Malraux if France would be willing to allow Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* from the Louvre to be exhibited in the United States. Malraux assented—some say to the shock and alarm of French diplomats, who considered the decision hasty. But at the beginning of 1963 the "the greatest picture in the world" was displayed at the National Gallery, introduced by Malraux.

A New Conception

Notwithstanding the breadth of American creativity and the power of the federal authorities, the United States had never possessed a permanent official body dedicated to the proposition, enunciated by President Kennedy in the presence of Pablo Casals, that the nation has "hundreds of thousands of devoted musicians, painters, architects, those who work to bring about changes in our cities, whose talents are just as important a part of the United States as any of our perhaps more publicized accomplishments." To recognize their contribution to the United States, President Kennedy named August Heckscher, grandson of a leading 19th-century industrialist who founded the Heckscher Museum in Huntington, New York, as his Special Consultant on the Arts. Heckscher was once described by the film critic Richard Schickel as "humane, sweet-tempered, rational, and liberal-minded." Heckscher had a long list of accomplishments outside the art world—a master's degree in government from Harvard, service with the Office of Strategic Services in World War II, member of the U.S. delegation at the United Nations conference in 1945, chief editorial writer at the New York *Herald Tribune* in the 1950s—and after his service under President

President John F. Kennedy meets with Special Consultant on the Arts August Heckscher and Heckscher's son in the Oval Office. (Photo by Robert Knudsen, White House/John Fitzgerald Kennedy Library)

Kennedy he would go on to be Parks Commissioner for New York City, as well as Administrator of Cultural Affairs.

Heckscher prepared a report titled "The Arts and the National Government," completed in May 1963, six months before President Kennedy's death. A few months before, in January, Senator Jacob Javitz (R-NY), with co-sponsors Senators Joseph Clark (D-PA), Hubert Humphrey (D-MN), and Claiborne Pell (D-RI), had introduced S. 165 "to establish a US National Arts Foundation," and in April Senator Humphrey had introduced S. 1316 "to establish a National Council on the Arts and a National Arts Foundation to assist the growth and development of the arts in the US." Initial co-sponsors were Senators Clark, John Sherman Cooper (R-KY), Javits, Russell B. Long (D-LA), Lee Metcalf (D-MT), Pell, Jennings Randolph (D-WV), Abraham Ribicoff (D-CT), and Hugh Scott (R-PA). Bolstered by the Senate's actions, Heckscher's report led to the establishment of the President's Advisory Council on the Arts, the direct predecessor of the current National Council on the Arts.

President Kennedy's death prevented the appointment of members to the Advisory Council. But his vision for the arts did not perish with him. At his passing, a proposal was already in the works for a "National Cultural Center" in Washington,

President John F. Kennedy viewing a model of the National Cultural Center by its architect, Edward Durell Stone (2nd from right), with future NEA Chairman Roger L. Stevens looking on (far left). (Photo courtesy of the Kennedy Center Archives)

D.C. In 1961, Roger L. Stevens, who later would play a major role in creating the National Endowment for the Arts, was named Chairman of the Board for the new performing arts center (which became a national memorial to the fallen leader, as the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts). Jarold A. Kieffer, the first board secretary and first executive director of the project, wrote in his 2004 memoir, *From National Cultural Center to Kennedy Center*, "With bipartisan support in the Congress, President Johnson . . . signed legislation authorizing that the Center bear Kennedy's name and providing a grant of $15.5 million in public funds . . . Congress specified that this grant was to be matched by an equal sum that the trustees had to raise from strictly private sources."

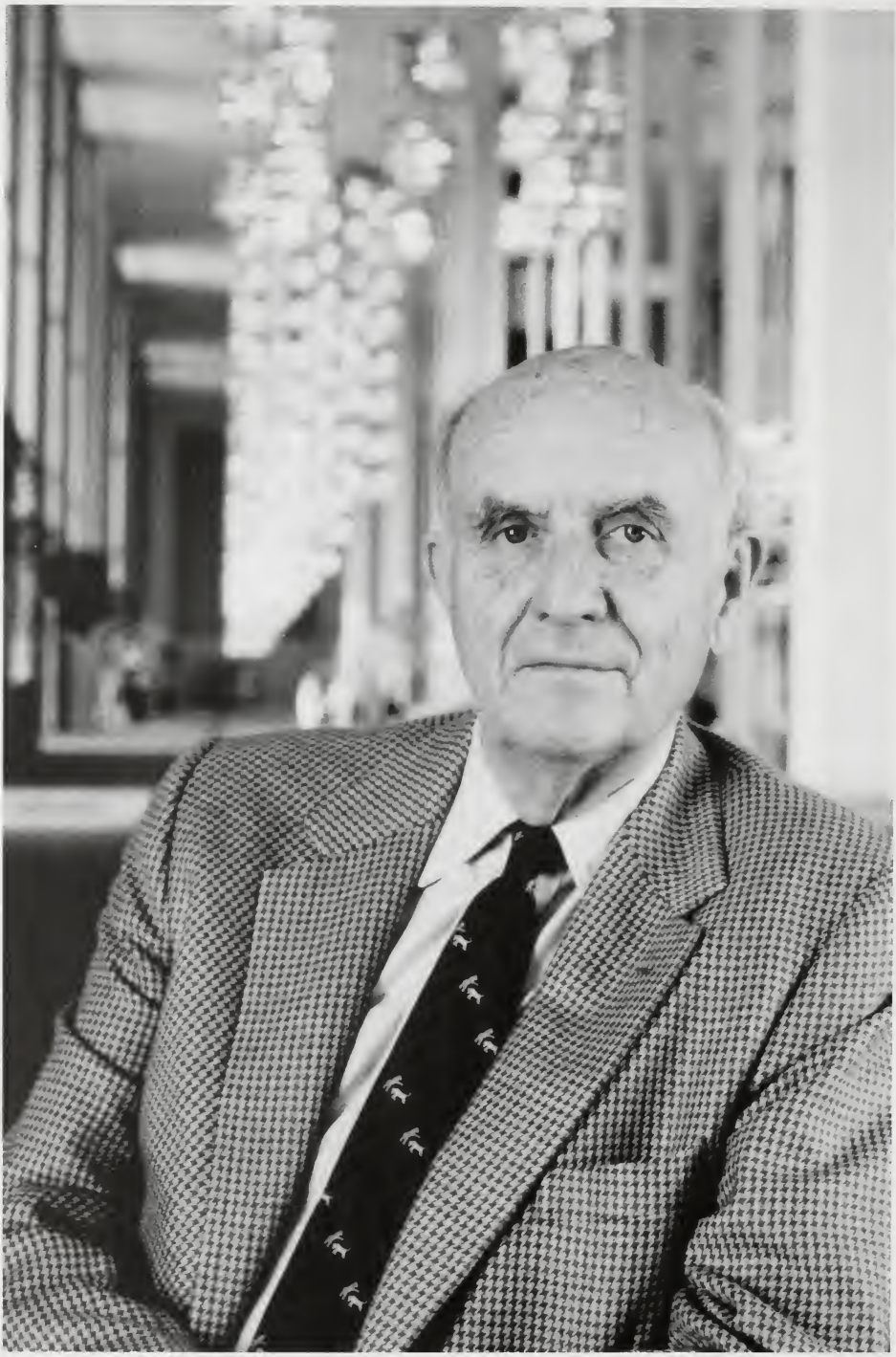
President Kennedy's legacy in the arts remained as much represented by Heckscher's report as by the new center. In a somewhat flat, governmental tone, his report discussed topics destined to become non-issues in the life of the NEA, such as acquisitions for "government collections of art, public buildings, American embassies"; employment of artists to memorialize military and space-exploration episodes; urban planning in Washington; tax rates, postal rates, copyright laws, and

an impractically wide range of other official concerns.

Yet Heckscher's report did identify the essential stimulus for the creation of a new federal arts agency—the historical development in American society that impelled the process to fruition. America in the 1960s was different from America at the end of the 19th century, when its elite first expressed curiosity about new aesthetic trends and different from America stricken by the heartbreak of the Depression, when its people needed reassurance that their collective dream could be renewed. When Theodore Roosevelt hosted Casals at the White House, and the New Deal hired artists and writers, interest in such efforts came from above, from the summits of power. Heckscher's report described a new avidity for the arts felt among the populace, generated by growing prosperity and rising expectations. He wrote, "Recent years have witnessed in the U.S. a rapidly developing interest in the arts. Attendance at museums and concerts has increased dramatically. Symphony orchestras, community theaters, opera groups, and other cultural institutions exist in numbers which would have been thought impossible a generation ago."

Heckscher's explanation for this was simple: "An increasing amount of free time, not only in the working week, but in the life cycle as a whole." Heckscher paid due homage to President Kennedy's ideal of an America that would lead the free world to victory over totalitarianism, writing, "[T]he U.S. will be judged—and its place in history ultimately assessed—not alone by its military or economic power, but by the quality of its civilization." Most of all, the National Endowment for the Arts was unquestionably a product of the youthful energy of the 1960s, which reflected a great new flowering of American culture after the Second World War. The Arts Endowment's achievements stand among the most enduring of that era.

America had changed profoundly, and stood on the edge of a genuine revolution in taste, habits, and mores. In areas far from the traditional centers of culture, people were demanding a local presence for music, dance, theater, and visual art. More and more, citizens were claiming the heritage of Walt Whitman, Edward Hopper, Frank Lloyd Wright, Martha Graham, Ella Fitzgerald, and other great American artists as their birthright, and they wanted access to music education, dance performances, professional drama, and regional artists. In ways none of its founders could predict, the National Endowment for the Arts would play a central role in meeting that call.



Roger L. Stevens, NEA Chairman 1965–69. (Photo courtesy of Kennedy Center Archives)

CHAPTER 2

A New World Beckons

After President Kennedy's death, the mission of founding a federal arts agency passed to his successor, President Lyndon B. Johnson, who had credentials as a world-changer in his own right. A Southern Democrat, he had broken with the tradition of his region and party to advocate strongly for full African-American citizenship, winning victory for the Voting Rights Act of 1965. President Johnson was also the only American president to have served his political apprenticeship during the New Deal. At the beginning of his career, he was Texas director of the National Youth Administration. President Johnson carried forward the Rooseveltian tradition in the form of the "Great Society," and sympathy for the establishment of a federal arts agency came naturally to him. He also clearly sought to maintain the youthful and sophisticated reputation of the Kennedy administration.

Soon after he became President, Johnson named Roger L. Stevens as America's first full-time presidential arts adviser. Not only had Stevens served at the top level on the project that became the Kennedy Center, he was also a successful property developer with experience as a Broadway producer and board member of prominent theaters. Stevens began working for passage of a set of congressional measures intended to realize the visions of Presidents Kennedy and Johnson. On December 20, 1963, after hearings by Senator Pell, then-Chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on the Arts, the Senate passed S. 2379, which combined provisions of the two bills from earlier in the year. Three weeks later, on January 8, 1964, Representative Frank Thompson introduced HR 9586 "to provide for the establishment of a National Council on the Arts to assist in the growth and development of the arts in the US"

and HR 9587 "to provide for the establishment of a National Council on the Arts and a National Arts Foundation to assist in the growth and development of the arts in the United States."

Senators Pell (1918–), Hubert Humphrey (1911–78), and Jacob Javits (1904–86) were major figures in modern American politics, and all represented the well-established liberal strains of the Democratic and Republican leadership in the 1950s and 1960s. All three were identified with the vision of America as a dominant world leader in culture and education, as well as in military power and politics. Senator Pell had overseen hearings on the proposed legislation beginning in October 1963, before the death of President Kennedy, and concluding after two months of debate. Senator Pell became known as a consistent supporter of American education, and backed creation of the National Endowment for the Humanities as well as the NEA. He opened the 1963 hearings with a momentous statement: "I believe that this cause and its implementation has a worldwide application; for as our cultural life is enhanced and strengthened, so does it project itself into the world beyond our shores . . . Let us apply renewed energies to the very concept we seek to advance: a true renaissance—the reawakening, the quickening, and above all, the unstunted growth of our cultural vitality."

Senator Humphrey was the first to speak in the 1963 discussion on the Senate floor. He had begun his career in elected office as a reforming mayor of Minneapolis, taking leadership of the state's Democratic-Farmer-Labor movement. Known as a "fighting liberal," he had worked for social betterment while also combating perceived Communist influence in Minnesota. He won his first Senate term in 1948; the same year, he led a floor fight at the Democratic National Convention for a commitment to African-American civil rights in the South. He was America's foremost activist Democrat for a decade. He would run as Lyndon B. Johnson's vice-presidential candidate in 1964.

Senator Humphrey's tone during the 1963 hearings was characteristic of his strong personal commitment to ideals, as well as his oft-noted eloquence. He declared, "This is at best a modest acknowledgement . . . that the arts have a significant place in our lives, and I can think of no better time to place some primary emphasis on it than in this day and age when most people live in constant fear of the weapons of destruction which cloud man's mind and his spirit and really pose an atmosphere of hopelessness for millions and millions of people . . . if there was ever an appropriate time for the consideration of this legislation it is now." Senator Humphrey pointed out, "The arts seldom make the headlines. We are always talking

about a bigger bomb . . . I wonder if we would be willing to put as much money in the arts and the preservation of what has made mankind and civilization as we are in . . . the lack of civilization, namely, war."

The Republican Javits was no less a representative of moderate liberalism, a friend of labor and civil rights. He embodied local reform traditions in the Empire State, which attracted much support to him across party lines. In the same 1963 Senate colloquy, he said, "Congress is lagging far behind the people in its failure to recognize the national importance of developing our cultural resources through support of the arts. It is high time that Congress took a real interest in this very essential part of our national life. Our national culture explosion is reflected in the number of arts festivals held this year, the growing number of new cultural centers in cities throughout the country, and the increasing list of State and local governments who have set up arts councils on the pattern of the New York State Council on the Arts . . . Traditionally the arts have received the greatest part of their support from philanthropic foundations and other private sponsors, but this is no longer adequate to meet today's demands and needs."

Javits continued, "Almost every civilized country in the world provides some assistance to the development of its art and culture." He added, "Some of the most renowned cultural institutions in the world would not be able to exist without government support," citing the Comédie Française in Paris, the Danish Royal Ballet, the Old Vic Theatre in London, and the Vienna State Opera.

National Council on the Arts Established

Approval for the arts proposals was delayed in the House, but in August 1964, legislation to establish the National Council on the Arts (NCA) passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 213 to 135. The Senate passed the bill the following day on a voice vote. On September 3, The National Arts and Cultural Development Act of 1964 was signed by President Johnson, establishing the Council with 24 members to "recommend ways to maintain and increase the cultural resources of the Nation and to encourage and develop greater appreciation and enjoyment of the arts by its citizens." One month later, an appropriation of $50,000 was approved for the NCA.

In March 1965, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund issued a report entitled *The Performing Arts: Problems and Prospects* (Nancy Hanks, a future chairman of the Arts Endowment, was the project director) stating that federal support was crucial to the future of the arts in America. On April 9–10, the first meeting of the National Coun-

cil on the Arts was held at the White House and the Smithsonian Institution's Museum of Science and Technology. Numerous issues were discussed, including revision of copyright laws, fine arts decoration of all future federally financed buildings, annual awards for outstanding artists, assistance to public television programming in the arts, improved cultural facilities and programs in national parks, transfer of surplus property to nonprofit arts institutions, and the recognition of museums and cultural centers as public facilities equal in importance to libraries and schools.

The National Council for the Arts for the year 1965 contained some of the most distinguished and talented artists, directors, and academics in the United States. Council subcommittees were established for each artistic discipline. These subcommittees came back with proposals including training for professional arts administrators, a national theater with low ticket prices, the establishment of an American Film Institute, and preservation of oral literature. The Council's second meeting, in Tarrytown, New York, came on June 24, 1965, at which discipline-based committees were organized, based on informal panels. At Tarrytown, the recommendation was made that creative artists be aided financially, to release them from other employment so that they might concentrate on creative work.

A Distinguished Roster

Appointed by President Johnson, the first National Council on the Arts included noted authors, artists, and other creative personalities: novelist Ralph Ellison; Paul Engle, poet and longtime director of the Iowa Writers' Workshop; actors Elizabeth Ashley and Gregory Peck ; Oliver Smith, theatrical designer, producer, and painter; William Pereira, architect and former film producer; Minoru Yamasaki, architect; George Stevens, Sr., film director and producer; composer/conductor Leonard Bernstein; choreographer Agnes de Mille; sculptor David Smith; violinist Isaac Stern; and newsman David Brinkley.

Museum directors and organization leaders included René d'Harnoncourt, Director, the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Albert Bush-Brown, President, Rhode Island School of Design; James Johnson Sweeney, Director, Houston Museum of Fine Arts, and a leading historian of modern art; Anthony A. Bliss, President, Metropolitan Opera Association, New York; Stanley Young, Executive Director, American National Theater and Academy, New York; Warner Lawson, Dean, College of Fine Arts, Howard University; Otto Wittmann, Director, Toledo Museum of Art, Ohio; R. Philip Hanes, Jr., President, Arts Councils of America, Winston-Salem, North Car-

olina; Eleanor Lambert, Honorary Member, Council of Fashion Designers of America, New York; Father Gilbert Hartke, Speech and Drama Department, Catholic University of America; and, ex-officio, Dr. S. Dillon Ripley, Secretary, Smithsonian Institution. Roger Stevens was named Chairman.

The same year also saw the expansion of the Arts Councils of America (ACA), later known as the Associated Councils of the Arts, and the opening of their first office in New York. Nancy Hanks, who would be a singularly important chairman of the NEA, was a key figure in getting ACA firmly established. Hanks was a Southerner, and much of the work that culminated in the inauguration of ACA as a "real" organization had begun in North Carolina, where business interests in Winston-Salem had adopted a strategy of support for the arts to create a more positive national reputation for a state and region damaged by images of poverty and racial turmoil.

Composer/conductor Leonard Bernstein, violinist Isaac Stern, and president of the Metropolitan Opera Association Anthony A. Bliss talk at one of the first National Council on the Arts meetings in Tarrytown, New York. (Photo by R. Philip Hanes, Jr.)

An Agency Is Born

On September 29, 1965, President Johnson signed the National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act as enabling legislation for the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. The Arts and Humanities Act included language clearly reminiscent of the Kennedy-era pledge to gain enhanced standing for America as a global exemplar: "The world leadership which has come to the United States cannot rest solely upon superior power, wealth, and technology, but must be founded upon worldwide respect and admiration for the Nation's high qualities as a leader in the realm of ideas and of the spirit."

That affirmation appeared in the "Declaration of Purpose" that Congress included as section 2 of the Act. It further stated:

President Lyndon B. Johnson signs the Arts and Humanities Act on September 29, 1965. (Photo courtesy of the Lyndon Baines Johnson Presidential Library)

- "the encouragement and support of national progress and scholarship in the humanities and the arts, while primarily a matter for private and local initiative, is also an appropriate matter of concern to the Federal Government;
- "a high civilization must not limit its efforts to science and technology alone but must give full value and support to the other great branches of man's scholarly and cultural activity;
- "democracy demands wisdom and vision in its citizens and . . . must therefore foster and support a form of education designed to make men masters of their technology and not its unthinking servant;
- "the practice of art and the study of the humanities requires constant dedication and devotion and . . . while no government can call a great artist or scholar into existence, it is necessary and appropriate for the Federal Government to help create and sustain not only a climate encouraging freedom of thought, imagination, and inquiry but also the material conditions facilitating the release of this creative talent."

In October 1965, the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, one of the earliest think tanks, held an extraordinary two-day meeting in its home city of Santa Barbara to explore the options before the new agency. Attendees at the event included Roger Stevens, who would become the first chairman of the NEA (1965–69). But the meeting also brought together some unconventional figures, such as Lawrence Lipton, the 66-year-old author of *The Holy Barbarians* (1959), a volume celebrating the Beat Generation, and Richard Lichtman, a Marxist academic. Others at the conference included distinguished curator Walter Hopps, actor Kirk Douglas, and director John Houseman, a veteran of the Federal Theater Project during the New Deal.

The Santa Barbara conference addressed topics that anticipated many difficulties the NEA would encounter over the decades. Gifford Phillips, a leading figure in the museum world, argued in a paper that art represented "an æsthetic alternative to the utilitarian pursuits" of American daily life. Phillips asserted that artists had never before been "so alienated from society," and that they have "a special need to live outside of society." He also declared that "independence from some, if not all, social constraints is what the artist most needs and should have." At the same time, he claimed that artists were so high-minded they should not submit to the power of money, though he underscored their need for it. The arts should therefore be funded and integrated into American society at the same time as their autonomy from it should be protected. This insoluble contradiction would become a permanent issue for the Arts Endowment.

The First NEA Grants

The National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act of 1965 had authorized $2.25 million to match unrestricted donations to the Arts Endowment in fiscal 1966–67. The first NEA grant was made to the American Ballet Theatre at the end of 1965, when Vice President Hubert Humphrey presented the organization with $100,000. As noted, Humphrey, as a Democratic senator from Minnesota, had been a champion of the Arts Endowment's establishment, in tandem with the New York Republican Jacob Javits. Critic Clive Barnes wrote in *The New York Times,* "History, or at least a tiny footnote to history, was made. . . . At the home of Oliver Smith, co-director of American Ballet Theatre with Lucia Chase, the first presentation of money was made by the National Council on the Arts." The New York *Herald Tribune* commented, "The Treasury of the United States has saved a national treasure."

The first complete series of grants was made in 1967. They illustrate the great

The first NEA grant was made in 1965 to the American Ballet Theatre, shown here performing *Swan Lake.* (Photo by Martha Swope)

range of projects the Arts Endowment has supported since its inception, as well as its expanding reach across the nation. They included in part:

• In architecture, planning, and design: 11 grants were awarded, totaling $281,100. The recipients included the Hawaii State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and the Lake Michigan Region Planning Council.

• In costume design: one grant amounting to $12,500 to National Educational Television to produce two films.

• In dance: seven grants for a total of $177,325, reaching companies as geographi-

cally diverse as the American Dance Festival at Connecticut College and a Washington State Arts Commission summer residency for the Joffrey Ballet in the Pacific Northwest.

• In education: ten institutional grants and five awards to deserving college graduates, for $892,780.

• In folk art: one grant for $39,500 to the National Folk Festival Association, later renamed the National Council for the Traditional Arts.

• In literature: 23 individual grants and nine institutional awards, totaling $737,010. These grants supported cultural preservation as well as creative writing.

• In music: 18 grants, for $703,858, included such recipients as the Boston Symphony, the Denver Opera, and the San Francisco Opera, in addition to companies based in New York.

• In public media: four grants for $788,300 in support of the American Film Institute, Chicago Educational Television, and other organizations.

• In theater: ten grants for $1,007,500. Recipients ranged from the Minnesota Theatre Company (at the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre) in Minneapolis, to Theatre, Inc. (the Association of Producing Artists) in Phoenix.

Under the heading "variety of art forms," four grants were awarded, totaling $376,300: one to the Rural Small Community Arts Program through the University of Wisconsin, one to the Alaska Centennial Commission, one to Jerome Robbins for an American Theater Laboratory, and one for a study of private foundation support for the arts.

In the visual arts, 60 individual grants and a range of other awards were given, for $735,995. Visual arts grants included funding for public sculpture in Philadelphia, Houston, and Grand Rapids, as well as support for three museums: the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston, the Amon Carter Museum of Western Art in Fort Worth, Texas, and the Detroit Institute of Arts.

In fall 1966, regional panels had begun convening to discuss the first NEA grants to visual artists. The New York panel included Henry Geldzahler; painter Robert Motherwell; critic Barbara Rose, whose intellect was finely attuned to avant-garde developments; and sculptor George Segal. Segal had at first rejected the concept of a governmental program to fund the arts as resembling "Soviet-type" manipulation of culture, but was convinced to participate after discussions with Chairman Roger Stevens.

In retrospect, the first NEA Visual Arts Fellowship grants, awarded in 1967, are impressive in their critical perspicacity. The roster of 60 names included numerous

artists then considered outside the mainstream, but outstanding in their excellence, such as the California artists Wallace Berman, Ed Ruscha, Billy Al Bengston, and Gary Molitor. The first grantees on the East Coast and in the Midwest were equally remarkable. In New York, Alfred Leslie, who was among the 1967 group, would play a leading role in NEA affairs for several years. Leslie was no less a member of the authentic American avant-garde than the aforementioned Californians, and was a successful artist in gallery sales. He had turned from Abstract Expressionism to portraiture in 1962. He had not been considered by the NEA panels that met in 1966, but then his studio was destroyed by fire, along with a considerable inventory of his most recent paintings. His NEA grant came in the aftermath and rescued him financially.

Involvement with the Newer Trends in Art

These initial grants show how closely the early NEA was involved with the most current tendencies in American creative life, especially in the visual arts. The agency supported Pop Art and neo-surrealism—at the same time as it fostered appreciation of other styles and genres. The Endowment did not merely reward established artists; it encouraged young and fresh talents previously overlooked or growing in acceptance. Other front-line figures in the historic roster of 1967 grantees included Leon Polk Smith, Mark di Suvero, Dan Flavin, Donald Judd, Manuel Neri, Tony Smith, and H.C. Westermann. None of them was a traditionalist. The exacting modernist critics Hilton Kramer, then of *The New York Times,* and Thomas Hess, of *ARTnews,* were both satisfied that excellent choices had been made. All of the grantees had been selected by their colleagues, and none had applied for NEA support; the new agency had not yet adopted a mechanism for applications.

The other areas of creativity saw equally sensible and enlightened awards in the first year. Architecture, planning, and design grants were made for landscape beautification, including hiking and bicycle trails and town redesign, and a series of environmental guides. The architectural and environmental theorist R. Buckminster Fuller received a grant to erect one his innovative geodesic domes at the 1968 Spoleto Festival (Charleston, SC), directed by Gian Carlo Menotti.

Film and Television

The year 1967 was also memorable in the history of the NEA and its mission because it saw the creation of the American Film Institute (AFI), one of the most durable and productive endeavors to emerge from a partnership between American government and the movie industry.

An innovative grant was also made in 1967 to New York National Educational Television (WNET), for two programs on American fashion designers, including an award-winning documentary on Pauline Trigère. In the same year, dance benefited especially from NEA assistance, with funding provided for the Association of American Dance Companies, the City Center Joffrey Ballet, and individual recipients.

The American Film Institute, founded in 1967 with funding from the NEA, has preserved thousands of films, such as *The Kid* (1921), starring Charlie Chaplin and Jackie Coogan. (Photo courtesy of AFI Stills Collection)

Arts Education

From the beginning, education in the arts has been an area for significant investment by the Arts Endowment. In 1967, education grants included major financing of a research and demonstration program by Fordham University to develop film and television training curricula for elementary and secondary schools—an idea that remains revolutionary today. A large grant in 1967 dollars—$681,000—was made to the Laboratory Theater Project to assist in training secondary school students in classical drama. The project created professional drama companies in two cities with free performances for secondary school students on weekday afternoons and for adults on weekends. It was aimed at improving the quality of school instruction by making theatre presentation of high quality integral to high school curricula. The two pilot cities were Providence, Rhode Island, and New Orleans, and performances included Anton Chekhov's *Three Sisters,* George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan,* Thornton Wilder's *Our Town,* and Richard Brinsley Sheridan's *The Rivals.* The original inspiration of this program has been revived and transformed in the present-day NEA through the Shakespeare in American Communities program.

The inaugural Folk Art grant was provided to the National Folk Festival Associa-

tion, for national and regional events in addition to research and publication of materials on American folklore. The Academy of American Poets received a substantial grant from the NEA literature office to develop poetry programs in New York, Detroit, San Francisco, and Pittsburgh high schools.

Literature

The Endowment's literature program in 1967 awarded 23 grants to individual writers, among them William Gaddis, Tillie Olsen, Grace Paley, May Sarton, Richard Yates, and Isaac Bashevis Singer. Non-fiction grants were awarded to Faubion Bowers, biographer of the Russian composer Alexander Scriabin, and Allan Seager, biographer of the poet Theodore Roethke.

In fiction as in the visual arts, a clear recognition of excellence was demonstrated by the awards, although the recipients generally were less associated with experimentalism. Eleven years after his NEA grant, Isaac Bashevis Singer, who wrote in Yiddish and whose works were traditionally first published as serials in the New York daily *Forward,* received the Nobel Prize in Literature. His NEA money permitted him to finish his novel *The Manor.* Tillie Olsen, whose literary career had begun amid the idealism of the 1930s, was only then emerging as an influential figure in American feminist letters. Richard Yates has come to be seen by literary critics and authors as a leading voice of alienation and loneliness in mid-century America.

Literary institutions were chosen in the first series of grants, including the Coordinating Council of Literary Magazines, which promoted cooperation among "little" magazines, or, as the Arts Endowment defined them, "small, struggling magazines." In addition, the Endowment provided $25,000 to the Watts Writers' Workshop, established by the novelist and screenwriter Budd Schulberg in the aftermath of rioting in the Watts district of Los Angeles in 1965. The Playwrights Experimental Theater also received a $125,000 grant to produce plays by Robert Lowell, among others, at Yale University, and by Studs Terkel at the University of Michigan. In addition, it funded Howard Sackler's *The Great White Hope,* one of the landmark dramatic works of its time; it starred Jane Alexander, who would become Arts Endowment chairman in 1993.

The first poets to receive individual NEA grants included Mona Van Duyn (the first female U.S. Poet Laureate), Hayden Carruth, Robert Duncan, Maxine Kumin, and Kenneth Patchen, as well as the translator I.L. Salomon, who was completing the Englishing of such modern Italian poets as Dino Campana and Mario Luzi. The

The NEA funded the original production of Howard Sackler's *The Great White Hope*, starring James Earl Jones and future NEA Chairman Jane Alexander. (Photo courtesy of Arena Stage)

presence of Duncan on this list suggests the range of tastes exemplified by these grants. He was a West Coast figure of deeply mystical bent whose work was known mainly to other poets, though his writing was universal in its humor, tenderness, and wisdom.

A striking item on the 1967 literary agenda of the Arts Endowment was the $10,000 award to Patchen. A libertarian during the 1930s, he wrote powerful anti-war poetry and became a resolute enemy of totalitarianism. He later turned to whimsy and love poetry. Due to a spinal injury, he was a semi-invalid, and his NEA grant sustained him in a time of great personal need.

Music

Music was a major focus of the Arts Endowment's grantmaking, with funding going to projects ranging from professional development institutes to organizational workshops to individual fellowships to major productions. In 1967, large grants

supported national tours by the Metropolitan Opera and by the San Francisco Opera, along with one to Carnegie Hall's *Jeunesses Musicales,* a youth program. The Metropolitan Opera grant enabled the company to give additional performances for labor groups and students in many states in order to develop new audiences for the art form. Grants were distributed to composers through a Composer Assistance Program that had begun in 1966, and which accounted for $18,458 in 1967. The program was administered by the American Symphony Orchestra League and the American Music Center. More general assistance to composers, totaling $30,000, was made available through the Thorne Music Fund.

Several music projects funded in the first years displayed the Arts Endowment's commitment to broad-based support for the arts. A 1967 grant to the National Music Camp at Interlochen (Michigan) enabled the organization to bring the International Society for Music Education Conference to the United States for the first time. A 1967 grant to conductor and violinist Alexander Schneider supported a project to meet the acute shortage of string musicians in the United States, while matching grants the same year to Hofstra University and to Violin Finishes had a preservation goal: respectively, a laboratory workshop on the technique of repairing string instruments and an experimental analysis of violin varnish believed to have enriched violin quality and resonance more than 200 years ago.

Matching Grant Requirement

Matching grants have been an essential element in the Endowment's practice. NEA "seed money" has generated many times more income for arts organizations than the dollars paid out in the grants themselves. As early as 1967, the Endowment reported that matching fund legislation by the Congress, establishing an unrestricted gift fund, had allowed the NEA to quadruple the money included in a grant: "The matching fund provision permits the National Endowment for the Arts to make four times the amount of an unrestricted donation available to artists or arts programming . . . One dollar in an unrestricted gift is matched by one Federal dollar, and these two dollars must be matched again if a grant is made to a group." Though this unrestricted gift fund was eventually eliminated, the agency continued to be a catalytic funding force in the arts. By the end of the century the ratio of NEA grant money to matching funds had risen to 1:7—that is, every Endowment grant dollar generated, by 2005, seven dollars more from other funders, ticket sales, and related sources.

Projects receiving matching grants in 1967 included the aforementioned grant to WNET for its Pauline Trigère documentary, as well as financing of general arts education and film education projects. A matching grant also supported Hull House, one of the oldest institutions for social improvement in the United States. Hull House was founded in Chicago by Jane Addams in 1889 as a "settlement house," and by the mid-1960s operated three community theaters; the grant helped establish theaters in Chicago public housing projects, bringing drama to audiences who had never seen a live theater performance. Across the gamut of Arts Endowment funding, matching grants were key elements in every area, from architecture, planning, and design through assistance to the National Folk Festival Association and including intercultural activities with Latin America and grants to small literary magazines.

Matching grants were especially important in 1967 for such major enterprises as the Metropolitan Opera Company in New York, the New York City Opera, the Denver Symphony, the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Boston Opera Company, and several theater, television, and visual arts programs. The next year, a major matching grant from the J.M. Kaplan Fund, Inc., along with support from the Federal Housing Administration, helped establish Westbeth, a former Bell Telephone Laboratories facility on New York's Lower West Side, which was converted into 384 residential units for artists and their families. Westbeth remains the largest artists' community in the world.

Early Congressional Review and Debate

In 1968, the NEA encountered the first critical congressional review of its fellowship program. In that year, after an acrimonious legislative debate, the Endowment's budget stood at $7.7 million, with grants made to 187 individuals and 276 organizations. New NEA programs included support for dance touring and museum acquisition of works by living American artists.

Congressional debate focused on the individual grants program. Some legislators expressed anxiety that the NEA would escape federal oversight, as well as the cultural norms of the American majority, by awarding unmonitored fellowships to individual artists. Some critics of NEA policy saw money for new styles in art as a form of state censorship of more traditional styles. Portrait painter Michael Werboff remonstrated, "under the protection of the Federal [authority], there is nothing to which the traditional artist can appeal for defense of their rights as contemporary American artists . . .

Dancer/choreographer Merce Cunningham was one of the artists who participated in the NEA's panel review of grants. (Photo by Jack Mitchell)

It puts the traditional American artist(s) into the hands of their worst enemy." His view was echoed by Rep. John Ashbrook (R-OH), who warned that the NEA could "reward the avant-garde artists and discourage the traditional artists." Meanwhile, Rep. William Scherle, an Iowa Republican who became known as the Arts Endowment's main early opponent, questioned the wisdom of any government spending on the arts at all. He commented, "I do not feel that it is past time to give thought to the propriety of Government-subsidized arts."

In addition, the congressional advocates of the NEA and its partner agency, the National Endowment for the Humanities, had requested an appropriation of $55 million over two years. But Congress instead approved a single-year budget for the NEA of $7.7 million for 1968. Wary of spending money on artists during an expensive military conflict overseas, the House of Representatives passed an amendment abolishing grants to individuals; the amendment was rejected in the Senate. The controversy over individual artists' grants continued to simmer, however, and would dominate debate over the Arts Endowment for decades.

Creation of the Panel Process

In Fiscal Year 1969, the NEA budget was marginally increased to $8.4 million, and a system of application review was established to replace the informal process that had operated at the beginning. By the mid-1970s, the panels would include dance experimentalist Merce Cunningham, fiction writer Donald Barthelme, jazz performer Cannonball Adderley, composer Gian Carlo Menotti, and producer-director Joseph Papp, the indefatigable impresario behind free Shakespeare productions in New

York's Central Park. By 1977, the Advisory Panel Members and Consultants included 437 slots, some of them occupied in two functions by the same person.

As Lyndon B. Johnson prepared to leave the presidency, Roger Stevens's tenure as Arts Endowment chairman approached its end. Stevens had worked with vigor and dedication in the founding stages of the Arts Endowment's history. The agency had been established whole, with no existing institutional legacy to draw from in the federal system, and had proved healthy enough to survive a time of heightened political passions and cultural ambitions. The early years of activity by the Arts Endowment had laid the basis for its fundamental promise: transforming the base and structure of the arts in America. By increasing the funding available for the arts, and by broadening arts activities among underserved groups and fields of endeavor, the agency had contributed to making the arts an indispensable feature of American life.

R. Philip Hanes, Jr., an original member of the National Council who battled the Chairman on critical issues, remembers Stevens as "a wonderfully wise and capable man who could achieve anything he felt was worth an effort—even what literally everyone knew was impossible. Washington was called a city of Northern charm and Southern efficiency. Not the least of his achievements was changing our nation's capital from a backwater to a cultural Mecca. And the National Endowment for the Arts could never have happened without him."

Nancy Hanks, NEA Chairman 1969–77. (Photo courtesy of NEA)

CHAPTER 3

A Fresh Direction

As the NEA grew from year to year, so did its reputation. Much of the credit goes to an event from which such an outcome might never have been expected: the 1968 election of Richard M. Nixon, who was committed to increasing the Arts Endowment's budget. To guide him in developing his cultural policy, Nixon appointed Leonard Garment, a New York lawyer of sophisticated interests and tastes, to the White House staff as his Special Consultant. Garment's areas of competence included arts and humanities "on the side," after numerous other priorities. When the term of Roger Stevens as NEA chairman expired two months after President Nixon's inauguration, Stevens's deputy chairman, the art educator Douglas MacAgy, was put in charge as acting chairman for six months. MacAgy had brilliantly transformed the teaching of art on the West Coast in the 1940s, but by the late 1960s was less active in the art world.

Nancy Hanks, who was destined to leave a deep impression on the NEA, succeeded Roger Stevens as the Arts Endowment's chairman on October 6, 1969. Hanks's leadership at the Rockefeller Brothers Fund and her tenure as head of the Arts Councils of America gave her an important populist perspective on arts funding and public policy. Born in Miami Beach, she graduated from Duke University after a childhood in Texas, Florida, New Jersey, and North Carolina. She served at the beginning of the 1950s in the Office of Defense Mobilization, and in the Eisenhower administration was a White House assistant for special projects. She entered the world of the Rockefellers in 1956–58, when Nelson Rockefeller held a position as President Eisenhower's special counsel.

Garment took major responsibility for maneuvering her appointment through the confirmation process, with the assistance of another of her close friends and supporters, Michael Straight, who became her deputy chairman. Before her appointment, she met with President Nixon, who assured her of his support for the agency's continued funding.

Hanks already had articulated a vision for national arts policy before being named to the Arts Endowment. In a 1968 article, she wrote, "In dollar comparison to our national needs for defense, for poverty programs, for health, for welfare, or for education, the requirements for the arts are minuscule. The support required for the arts, for the improvement of our cities . . . will come from a myriad of individuals, foundations, corporations, as well as governments."

Hanks began her tenure with enthusiasm. In an interview with *The New York Times* soon after her confirmation, she commented, "A great orchestra or a fine museum is a natural resource, like a park. It must be maintained. I believe this, and so does the National Council [on the Arts]." She later recalled in an oral history, "I do not remember having any real question about which way the agency would go. I knew almost all the program directors well. . . . They had used their little money wisely. You had a strong basic staff. You had a very good council. Therefore, right from the beginning, I had a feeling of total confidence in the people I was working with."

The President's Men

The appointments of Garment and Hanks reflected a commitment to the arts that few would have ascribed to Richard Nixon. Garment himself has averred that President Nixon's support for NEA represented a conciliatory gesture to liberal intellectuals, who were increasingly disaffected by the combat in Vietnam. The jocular Garment remains a surprising figure to many who encounter him, expecting a dour political operative. He first had looked toward a professional life as a jazz musician, playing the tenor saxophone, and dropped out of college during World War II to perform. Garment eventually was drafted, and his place in Teddy Powell's band, for which he had been playing, was taken by Lee Konitz, who would later gain fame as an exemplar of the West Coast style of cool jazz. Garment was dismissed from the service on medical grounds, and returned first to jazz and then to college. His new band included Larry Rivers, later acclaimed as a painter, and a young flautist-saxophonist named Alan Greenspan, who would one day become

President Richard M. Nixon holds an informal meeting in the Oval Office with NEA Chairman Nancy Hanks and Special Consultant Leonard Garment in December 1969. (Photo by Karl Schumacher)

chairman of the Federal Reserve. College led Garment to the legal profession and a career as a New York investment lawyer. After Nixon failed in his gubernatorial campaign in California, he moved to New York and joined the law firm where Garment worked. Six years later Garment joined President-elect Nixon in Washington to help him assemble staff for his administration.

Other distinctive personalities served in the agency during the Nixon administration, or, as many NEA veterans wryly refer to it, "the Hanks administration"—a justifiable claim, since Hanks's tenure extended beyond Nixon's to 1977. (Due to the Senate confirmation process, NEA Chairman terms usually extend somewhat beyond those of the presidents who appoint them.) Michael Straight served promi-

Jacob Lawrence, who created iconic works about African-American life, such as *Ironers* (1943) pictured, was one of the artists honored by an NEA-sponsored reception for participants in the New Deal arts programs. (Photo courtesy of the Phillips Collection)

nently as deputy chairman. A writer, philanthropist, and former editor of *The New Republic*, Straight became a close colleague and biographer of Hanks after her untimely death in 1983. Straight had served as an unpaid advisor to the State Department, and, briefly, at the Interior Department, during the New Deal. He was offered an advisory position in the Kennedy administration, which he had turned down because of his former association with a Soviet spy ring. He then briefed the Federal Bureau of Investigation on his knowledge of Russian espionage, and by 1969, he was cleared to work under Hanks.

One of the first events held by the NEA under Hanks's chairmanship was a reception to honor veterans of the New Deal's arts programs, including some who remained staunch radicals in their old age, although several had altered their style

from Depression-era realism to modernist abstraction. Participants included the painters Milton Avery, William Gropper, Philip Evergood, Adolph Gottlieb, Jacob Lawrence (named to the National Council of the Arts in 1978), Louise Nevelson (one of the first recipients of the National Medal of Arts in 1985), and Isaac and Moses Soyer. In a memoir of Hanks, Straight recalled that "most of them could not believe that two bureaucrats of the Nixon administration wanted to honor them. There was a great deal of laughter before the party ended—and a few tears."

Hanks herself had been viewed with suspicion by a conservative element in the arts community, which feared that her work as a staffer to Governor Nelson Rockefeller and his brothers—whose family was involved in founding the Museum of Modern Art in New York and was an aggressive promoter of the artistic avant-garde—would entrench an experimental bias in the NEA. This criticism was an indicator of rough seas ahead for the Arts Endowment.

First Controversies

In 1969, a commotion over individual NEA grants—an ongoing source of aggravation for some of the Endowment's critics—finally erupted in public. A work by Aram Saroyan, son of the famous author William Saroyan and a practitioner of a style of writing known as "concrete poetry," was included in the second NEA-funded *American Literary Anthology,* a volume drawn from literary journals and edited by George Plimpton. Saroyan's contribution to the 1969 collection consisted of a one-word concrete poem that read, verbatim, "lighght." The grant was attacked in Congress, most notably by Rep. William Scherle, the determined and prolific critic of the NEA. The Saroyan episode was Nancy Hanks's first test as chairman, and she passed it successfully, calming senators and representatives enraged by the Endowment's payment of $750 to the *Chicago Review* for Saroyan's seven-letter poem. As Joseph Wesley Zeigler, a historian of the Arts Endowment, wrote in his volume *Arts in Crisis: The National Endowment for the Arts Versus America,* "Hanks worked her way through the halls of Congress and charmed the legislators."

A second such dispute, involving Plimpton's acceptance of a provocatively obscene work by poet and rock performer Ed Sanders for the next *American Literary Anthology,* which appeared in 1970, led to a cutoff of NEA funding for the annual. In addition to criticism from conservative critics, a few prominent literary figures, such as San Francisco Beat poet Lawrence Ferlinghetti, questioned Sanders's acceptance of government money. Ferlinghetti declared that he would never apply for an NEA

grant, a position to which he adhered. But the habit of testing the NEA's limits as a public agency providing funds for the arts had made its first appearance.

Hanks's Vision: Art for All Americans

Zeigler noted that, in the Sanders case, Nancy Hanks "had preserved the essential balance between artistic freedom and Congressional concern and oversight." Hanks's vision for the NEA was democratizing in more ways than one. August Heckscher, as President Kennedy's conceptual developer for federal arts support, had envisioned programs that would imitate the European model, in which central governments supported national theaters, museums, cinémathèques, dance companies, and literary and language academies. But the NEA was destined to forge partnerships with nonprofit arts organizations, rather than underwriting the budgets of official state-sponsored organizations.

Hanks favored support of local and regional institutions to extend access and foster creativity. To encourage a broader range of applications and an expanded geographic reach for NEA-funded works, she introduced a standardized process for awarding grants. She was particularly committed to assisting state programs, reflecting her earlier experience in helping establish the New York State Arts Council. She has been described as understanding art as a medium for public betterment, and many of her programs such as Artists-in-the-Schools reflected her sense of duty to the American citizenry as well as to American artists.

Hanks's "art-for-all-Americans" won support from legislators, most of whom represented districts far from the artistic centers of the country. The NEA soon achieved a doubling of its budget, from $8.25 million for 1970 to $15.1 million in 1971. Hanks's and Straight's lobbying of legislators made the increase possible. New activities included the innovative Artists-in-the-Schools program which, with $900,000 from the U.S. Office of Education, sent more than 300 artists into elementary and secondary schools in 31 states. Such programs not only were important on their merits, but represented a commitment by the Arts Endowment to bring the arts to young audiences that might have few other opportunities to experience them. At the same time, the programs expanded their scope: music now included jazz and orchestras, and photography was added to the visual arts program.

Along with such remarkable personalities as Hanks, Garment, and Straight, the NEA team recruited Brian O'Doherty, who arrived with Hanks in 1969. A former editor-in-chief of the magazine *Art in America*, he would direct the NEA Visual Arts

Program and then the Media Arts Program for 27 years. O'Doherty was an iconoclastic intellectual even by the standards of the arts scene of the late 1960s. He boasted of his friendship with perhaps modernism's most inventive personality, Marcel Duchamp, and admired the surrealist poet and critic André Breton.

Some believe that the Nixon administration viewed support for the NEA as a means to quell discontent regarding foreign policy decisions in Indochina. Michael Brenson, a commentator on the Arts Endowment, has argued in *Visionaries and Outcasts: The NEA, Congress, and the Place of the Visual Artist in America* that Brian O'Doherty "helped the Endowment to maintain its credibility among the most vocal and activist artists during some of the most explosive years of the Vietnam War." Two of the central figures in the Nixon Administration, Leonard Garment and William Safire, both remember how support for the arts figured in the politics of the day. In the 2006 Nancy Hanks Lecture on Arts and Public Policy, Safire recalled, "I knew this remarkable woman [Hanks] during the Nixon years in Washington when I worked in the White House. My fellow speechwriter, Ray Price, was enlisted by this Rockefeller Brothers arts enthusiast in the cause of federal support for the arts. . . . Expectations were low, to say the least, for President Nixon's support of the arts. But Nancy Hanks and Ray had a powerful ally in Leonard Garment. . . . Nancy kept in close touch with Len, providing all the artistic arguments, and Len in turn worked over the president, who admired Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra. But I can hear Nixon's voice now, saying to me from his place in purgatory, 'You know, Bill, there's not a single vote in this for me.'"

In his 1989 Nancy Hanks Lecture on Arts and Public Policy, Garment explained, in terms free of cynicism and politics, why President Nixon favored the Arts Endowment. The extraordinary funding increases "did not come about just because the powers that be suddenly changed their minds one morning and decided it was time to give culture the respect it deserved. Nor did it happen mainly because President Nixon was persuaded of the concrete political benefits that support for the arts would bring him. More important was that Richard Nixon knew the extent to which the Vietnam War had turned America into two mutually hostile camps. The president wanted for his own an issue that would not divide his audience into sympathetic hawks and hostile doves. It was more an effort to soften and survive than divide and conquer, but this was the reason my arguments found favor."

The political motivations have faded with the passage of time, but the fact remains that President Nixon's support for the Arts Endowment transformed the NEA from a tiny federal program into a significant policy leader in the arts.

Hanks's Balancing Act

Nancy Hanks had the extraordinary difficult task of balancing the political requirements of the administration, the political protests of the intellectuals, the populist tastes of the administration and many legislators, and the growth of extreme tendencies in the art world. Hanks defended and protected the NEA, thanks to her talent for political persuasion and her recruitment of a talented phalanx of aides.

As the 1970s wore on, attitudes toward the NEA gradually changed. A new generation of artists arose for whom the NEA was part of the existing environment, rather than an innovation. Many of them, according to Zeigler's *Arts in Crisis,* "had come to believe that they were entitled to federal funding: 'You, the United States, should be paying for me to create, because I'm here and I'm creating. As an artist, I'm an important member of the society—and so the society should be supporting me.'" At times, these artists would pressure the Arts Endowment to consider themselves, rather than the American public, the proper focus of the agency's attention. To this constituency, the agency appeared more a foundation than a public agency.

In addition, the immense expansion of higher education during the 1960s produced a vastly larger number of aspiring artists than had existed in the 1950s. From 1950 to 1961, first-year college enrollments nearly doubled from 2.2 million to 4.1 million. Corresponding figures more than doubled again to 8.6 million in 1970, then rose by half to 12 million in 1980. Many of these students were recruited to arts programs, and after graduation pursued arts careers.

During these transformative years under Hanks, NEA funding rose from $9 million in FY 1970 to $99.8 million in FY 1977. With a soaring budget and, in accord with Hanks's vision, the spread of Endowment grantees across the country, the NEA became a centrally influential institution in the world of American art. In a 1974 article in *The New York Times Magazine,* writer David Dempsey praised Hanks as "the person who has done as much as anyone in Government or out, to bring about this change in attitude [i.e. favor toward the arts]." Once labeled "the lady from Culture Gap," Hanks had become the fourth highest female appointee in the Nixon Administration.

In contrast, according to Dempsey, was Sen. Claiborne Pell (D-RI), who wondered whether the paintings the government was paying for were "realistic," that is, representational, or "did they consist of doodles and swirls?" Dempsey saw the new Visual Arts Director, O'Doherty, as fitting ably into an environment of "young, bright, dedicated and suitably hip" staff. Dempsey also observed that "the joy of giving has

nurtured a new type of government bureaucrat"—something few expected from the Nixon set. He noted that the NEA had come on the scene as private arts funding "was beginning to shrink"; yet this took place simultaneously with a "culture explosion." The reasons for the latter were those identified by August Heckscher during the Kennedy administration: "more leisure and affluence for the average person . . . a new generation of college-bred taste makers in small towns and cities, life-styles modeled on artistic rather than commercial values."

Organizational Expansion

The NEA under Hanks was as prolific in its work as it was well-financed, and the national outreach continued. Beginning in 1971, 55 state and territorial arts agencies (including the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands) received Basic State Grants from the Endowment. Illustrating her dedication to every citizen, one of Hanks's favorite projects was Artrain USA, a railroad service that brought a locomotive and six coaches to towns in Michigan, carrying silversmiths and macramé artists, potters, and sculptors to places that had no museums. It began as an idea of the Michigan Council for the Arts, which recruited Helen Milliken, the Lieutenant Governor's wife, to raise $850,000 for the project. But after a talk with Chairman Hanks in Washington, fundraising took off and the idea went national. "It was tremendously important to have the backing of the NEA when we went to businesses and major industries asking for funding," Milliken recalls. "It was the key; we couldn't have raised that kind of money without that initial boost." Soon after, when Milliken became the First Lady of the State of Michigan, she was able to

Helen Milliken, then First Lady of Michigan, engineered Artrain's creation in 1971, with support from the NEA. (Photo courtesy of Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University)

expand Artrain USA into eight of the Rocky Mountain States, with the Arts Endowment providing a grant to cover half the trips's costs.

NEA funding doubled in 1972 to $29.7 million, allowing expansion of existing programs, including the establishment of full support programs for opera and jazz. Regional dance companies became eligible for assistance in professional development, as part of a total of $2.3 million awarded in the dance field; among the better-known recipients were Alvin Ailey, who was granted $20,000, and Alwin Nikolais, awarded $15,280. Music programs received the largest share, $9.75 million. Smaller awardees ranged from the Oakland Symphony Orchestra to the Bach Society of Minnetonka, Minnesota. However, within the music budget, leading orchestras accounted for the greatest share, receiving more than $5 million.

The impact of early Arts Endowment grants is well expressed by Joan Woodbury, Co-Artistic Director of the Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company in Salt Lake City. In 1972, Ririe-Woodbury received support to participate in the agency's two dance programs, Artists-in-the-Schools and Dance Touring. The outcome "sent this small dance company from the West on a course of national and international service," Woodbury recalls. "For the nine-year life of these two programs the company toured to almost every state in the Union. They developed artists, commissioned new works, and developed artist-teachers to fulfill their goals." This was a case of the agency identifying a worthy but fledgling organization and granting it sustainability. "Without the 'stamp of approval' from the NEA . . . very few of the accomplishments of this company would have been possible," Woodbury observed in 2006. "We can proudly say, with many others, 'We're still alive and kicking.'"

Many leading authors and poets received grants of $5,000 each in 1972, including Stanley Elkin, Richard Ellman, Etheridge Knight, William Meredith, Carl Rakosi, James Schuyler, and William Jay Smith. Regional film centers were now included in a public media program. In 1972, President Nixon responded to recommendations from federal agencies on design issues by adopting Nancy Hanks's creation, the Federal Design Improvement Program. The program was intended to bring fresh energy to every area of design in which government was involved, including architecture, the use of graphics, and standards for design procurement.

The number of advisory panels rose to ten, with members serving three-year terms. The panels had begun as "peer panels," and were established by a 1965 resolution of the National Council on the Arts calling for the Chairman to "appoint committees of interested and qualified persons or organizations to advise the Council with respect to projects, policies or special studies as may be undertaken." They

Writer Eudora Welty, center, was appointed to the National Council on the Arts in 1972, joining other members such as jazz pianist Billy Taylor (right) and museum director E. Leland Webber (left). (Photo by David E. Hausmann)

had been formalized in 1969, and in 1973 they were expanded to include 200 members. The painter Roy Lichtenstein began serving, as did the authors Toni Morrison and Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. Other prominent authors served in various capacities too. For example, beloved writer Eudora Welty was appointed by President Nixon to the National Council on the Arts in 1972, and she served on the Arts Endowment's 20th Anniversary Committee of Leading American Artists in 1984.

In 1973, Artrain USA expanded its operations to the Western states, touring to 30 towns in New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, Utah, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, and Nevada. Television reporter Charles Kuralt did a story on Artrain USA as it moved through Idaho and Wyoming. Artrain USA continues to this day, having visited more than 725 communities in 44 states and the District of Columbia. It changes shows every two or three years, the current tour being *Native Views: Influences of Modern Culture,* a contemporary Native American art exhibition estimated to reach 250,000 visitors in 100 primarily rural and Native American host communities across America.

In 1974 a controversy erupted over an NEA grant that proved to be one of the most significant crises in the agency's early history. One year earlier, Erica Jong had received a $5,000 NEA Literature Fellowship, and soon after her novel *Fear of Flying* was published. A provocative work dealing frankly with sexual themes, Jong's novel included an acknowledgement to the Arts Endowment. The chairman of the Literature Advisory Panel in 1973, which oversaw the award to her, was the prominent book editor Simon Michael Bessie. Contention over *Fear of Flying* extended to the U.S. Senate, but was resolved with help from pro-Endowment legislators.

Michael Straight surprised many people when he wrote 14 years later, in *Nancy Hanks: An Intimate Portrait,* that Hanks had been wrong to make the grant to Jong, and that the Arts Endowment's critics, led by North Carolina Senator Jesse Helms, were correct in objecting to the novel's funding from public appropriations. Straight argued that while the NEA might justifiably finance controversial projects that had support from other patrons, in the Jong case the government was the sole backer of the project, even though the original grant was not tied to a particular project, but only to support for the writer. (In the original legislation, the Endowment was prohibited from granting more than 50 percent of the cost of any project to a group; however, 20 percent of the NEA budget for a fiscal year was exempt from this restriction provided that the grant applicant could prove that it had tried unsuccessfully to secure other funds.)

Hanks's Second Term

Nancy Hanks was reappointed NEA chairman in 1974. Her first term had seen a seven-fold increase in the Endowment's budget, which now stood at $64 million. The National Council on the Arts established a committee to integrate the arts into the 1976 observance of the Bicentennial of the United States. In 1972, Nancy Hanks had anticipated arts input to the Bicentennial by calling on Americans to mark the occasion with "pride in American dance."

By the end of 1974, President Nixon had left office, succeeded by President Gerald R. Ford. President Ford came out early in support of the agency, recalling the civic impact of an enormous 42-ton sculpture by Alexander Calder in the center of what is now Calder Plaza in Grand Rapids, MI, Ford's home town. The sculpture was funded by a grant of $45,000 from the Arts Endowment's Works of Art in Public Places program, and it has become a symbol for the city. Each year on the anniversary of Calder's birth, the city hosts an arts festival encompassing ten city blocks and attended by half a million people. According to City Historian Gordon Olson, the project "changed the role of the arts and public sculpture in the life of this community."

The Endowment shared building space at Columbia Plaza in Foggy Bottom with the U.S. Bicentennial Commission headed by John Warner, later a U.S. Senator from Virginia. But in part because of its growth in personnel, the Arts Endowment moved to McPherson Square and occupied a building that also housed the investigators of the Watergate scandal. "Every day we had to face a battery of television cameras when we arrived and left work," recalled Ann Guthrie Hingston,

who served under Hanks and again under Chairman Dana Gioia as Government Affairs Director.

America had changed considerably in the decade since the Endowment's creation, but the NEA maintained its commitment to the arts for all Americans. The Endowment's tenth anniversary was celebrated September 29–30, 1975, at the Lyndon B. Johnson Library in Austin, Texas. The event coincided with the public opening of the presidential papers on the arts and humanities and included the participation of Nancy Hanks, Lady Bird Johnson, Hubert Humphrey, Jacob Javits, Kirk Douglas, Jamie Wyeth, and Beverly Sills.

Arts and Artifacts Indemnity Act

In December 1975, President Ford signed the Arts and Artifacts Indemnity Act. The new legislation, whose original authorized limit was $250 million, facilitated the insuring of art, artifacts, and other objects for exhibition in the U.S. This program meant that extremely valuable works of art housed around the world could now be transported to the U.S. for exhibition with their value protected in cases of damage, theft, or vandalism. With the entry of major works of art and archaeological artifacts from abroad, America saw the beginning of massive, "blockbuster" museum shows on major themes in art history, ranging from the tombs of ancient Egyptian pharaohs to retrospectives of the greatest modern painters and sculptors.

Earl A. Powell III, Director of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC, and former member of the National Council on the Arts, hailed the program many years later. "Because of the indemnity program," he commented in a 2000 NEA publication, "members of the public get to experience tremendous works of art that they wouldn't normally be able to see unless they could travel to the countries of origin." Since its inception, the indemnity program has been a key element in more than 800 exhibitions involving 200 museums and has saved organizers more than $170 million in insurance premiums. Coverage is now available up to $10 billion, with a maximum of $1.2 billion on any single exhibition. A 2004 annual report to the Congress on the indemnity program noted that, in the previous fiscal year, it supported shows representing a range of epochs and styles, from the art of the Silk Road in Central Asia to watercolors by Western European woman artists from The Hermitage in St. Petersburg, Russia. The program has enabled Americans to view the works of El Greco, Paul Gauguin, Marc Chagall, British portraitist Thomas Gainsborough, the Russian founder of the Suprematist movement Kazimir Malevich, the

The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York has presented many world treasures through the indemnity program, such as *Splendors of Imperial China* in 1996. (Photo courtesy of Metropolitan Museum of Art)

American modern sculptor and designer Isamu Noguchi, and British contemporary realist Lucien Freud.

The indemnity program is staffed and administered by the Arts Endowment on behalf of the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities. Applications for indemnity are reviewed by the Council, which consists of the chairmen of the Arts and Humanities Endowments, the Librarian of Congress, the Archivist of the United States, the Director of the National Science Foundation, the Secretaries of State, the Interior, Commerce, Education, Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, Labor, and Veterans Affairs, and other public officials. Over the last 25 years, the program, staffed by Alice M. Whelihan, has only had two claims totaling $104,700 submitted to and paid by Congress.

U.S. Representative John Brademas (D-IN) played a prominent role in shepherding the indemnity legislation through Congress. In 1977, Congressman Brademas

would again serve the cause of the arts by cosponsoring, with Senator Pell, a four-year reauthorization of the Arts Endowment's operations. With the election of President Jimmy Carter, Nancy Hanks prepared for the completion of her second term.

Challenge Grants

Established by Congress in 1976 with a special line the NEA's appropriation, the NEA Challenge Grants program began in the final months of Chairman Hanks's tenure. Most Arts Endowment grants had required one-to-one matching funds from private and other sources. Under the new program federal funds were offered not for specific arts projects but to help organizations generate private funds for construction of arts facilities and development of endowments. In some cases, they reached half a million dollars and went to major institutions, requiring at least a three-to-one match. The program lasted 20 years until the Endowment suffered large budget cuts in the mid-1990s and was prohibited from giving funds for general operating support. Challenge Grants were an early example of recognizing that a method of funding that worked in one community didn't work in another, and that the Arts Endowment would have to innovate repeatedly to foster the arts in a fluid democratic nation like the United States.

The first round of Challenge Grants provided $27 million, over two years, for 66 organizations. The recipients included the Foundation for the Joffrey Ballet, in New York; the WGBH Educational Foundation in Boston; the Walker Art Center, in Minneapolis; the Seattle Symphony Orchestra Association; and the American Conservatory Theater Foundation in San Francisco, as well as many other prominent institutions. Over the 20 years of the program, Challenge Grants proved hugely successful, generating many times the amounts disbursed by the government and helping arts institutions build the financial foundation to sustain themselves through the ups and downs of the economy. Rep. Norm Dicks (D-WA), for instance, speaks fondly of the impact of Challenge Grants on private giving for arts organizations in his state.

End of the "Nancy Hanks Era"

Several years after Nancy Hanks left the Arts Endowment, the Old Post Office, at 1100 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W., in Washington, DC, was renamed the Nancy Hanks Center, in recognition of her tireless efforts to save the building from demolition and a

fitting tribute to her long and productive tenure. During her chairmanship, the Arts Endowment's operations covered all 50 states and six U.S. territories. Nancy Hanks shaped the Arts Endowment and its career staff, while developing seed grants for major arts institutions and supporting the Bicentennial celebration, which took place close to the end of her second term.

Nancy Hanks's legacy was one of outstanding dynamism, and the effects of her years as NEA chair were varied. One far-reaching aspect of Hanks's tenure was the growth of the state arts agencies, reflecting her previously noted role in the establishment of the New York State Arts Council. By 2004, state agencies' funding had reached $281.1 million, more than twice the NEA budget of $121 million that year. Other important aspects of her chairmanship included the impressive expansion of the audience for dance and the extraordinary spread of regional theaters. Indeed, as Peter Donnelly, Managing Director of the Seattle Repertory Theatre, stated in 1976, "What has been accomplished in the last decade with the assistance of the Endowment has been quite phenomenal. A theater which for all practical purposes did not exist except in New York has been created nationally."

Another area of achievement came through the initiatives of Programming in the Arts (later called Arts on Television). Several outstanding individual programs in the early 1970s received Endowment funding. Allan Miller's 1973 film *The Bolero,* featuring Zubin Mehta conducting the Los Angeles Philharmonic in a performance of Maurice Ravel's score, won an Academy Award for Best Live Action Short Film. The television dance special *American Ballet Theatre: A Close Up in Time* (1973) was a 90-minute profile that included various ballet and dance performances, and *Alvin Ailey: Memories and Visions* (1974) was a 60-minute program with selections from Ailey's work performed by the City Center Dance Theater.

In January 1976, two series changed the profile of the performing arts on television, and both were developed with funding from the Arts Endowment. *Dance in America* was a groundbreaking program that fused the television medium with the choreographer's art. Famed choreographers such as George Balanchine, Robert Joffrey, Martha Graham, and Alvin Ailey teamed with television directors Merrill Brockway and Emile Ardolino to restage works specifically for the small screen. *Dance in America*'s first broadcast season included performances by the Joffrey Ballet, Twyla Tharp, the Martha Graham Dance Company, and the Pennsylvania Ballet. At the same time, the Arts Endowment funded a study of the Joffrey Ballet to determine whether increased television broadcasts would cut into live attendance at the theater. The finding was that television exposure actually *increased* attendance.

U.S. Poet Laureate Ted Kooser received his first NEA Literature Fellowship in 1976. (Photo courtesy of Ted Kooser)

The other series was *Live from Lincoln Center,* one of the most successful programs ever produced for broadcast on public television. The Arts Endowment provided funding for, among other things, the development of low-light-level cameras that could record live performances without disturbing the performers or the audience. *Live from Lincoln Center*'s first season featured Andre Previn conducting the New York Philharmonic with Van Cliburn, the New York City Opera performing *The Ballad of Baby Doe,* and American Ballet Theatre's *Swan Lake.* The series is now in its 31st season, and produces six shows a year that average an audience of 5 million viewers.

Another grant in a different medium had a similar long-term impact. In 1974, a grant from the Arts Endowment helped Garrison Keillor and Minnesota Public Radio inaugurate *A Prairie Home Companion,* which has grown into one of the most listened-to radio shows in the country. In testimony before Congress in 1990, Keillor highlighted the "seed" aspect of NEA grants: "By the time the show became popular and Lake Wobegon became so well-known that people thought it was real, the Endowment had vanished from the credits, its job done. When you're starting out . . . it seems like nobody wants to give you a dime. When you have a big success and everything you could ever want, people can't do enough for you. The Endowment is there at the beginning, and that's the beauty of it." Speaking before the Senate Subcommittee on Education, Arts and Humanities, Keillor went further, noting that "Today, in every city and state, when Americans talk up their home town invariably they mention the arts." He termed this growing respect for the arts "a revolution—small and lovely—that the Endowment has helped to bring about."

Hanks's commitment to excellence bore fruit in the careers of Arts Endowment literary grantees as well. Among authors who received NEA funding during her tenure, the following poets went on to win the Pulitzer Prize:

- Donald Justice (NEA, 1967, 1973, 1980, 1989, Pulitzer, 1980)
- Mark Strand (NEA 1968, 1978, 1986, Pulitzer 1999)
- Louise Gluck (NEA 1970, 1979, 1988, Pulitzer 1993)
- Stephen Dunn (NEA 1973, 1981, 1989, Pulitzer 2001)
- Charles Simic (NEA 1975, 1979, Pulitzer 1990)
- Charles Wright (NEA 1975, 1984, Pulitzer 1998)
- Philip Levine (NEA 1976, 1981, 1987, Pulitzer 1995)
- Ted Kooser (NEA 1976, 1984, Pulitzer 2005)

One of Nancy Hanks's most significant personnel decisions was to hire in 1975 the African-American poet and jazz writer A.B. Spellman. Spellman first served as a consultant in arts education, from which he was promoted to leading positions in Expansion Arts, where he personally contributed to innovations in arts funding. In 2005, Spellman recalled the origin of Expansion Arts, a major addition during the Hanks period: "It was founded and named by my predecessor, the late Vantile Whitfield. . . . [I]ts purpose was to find and develop professional arts organizations that were according to the letters of the guidelines 'deeply rooted in and reflective of the culture of minority intercity, rural, and tribal communities.' We were responsible along with folk arts for . . . expanding the cultural portfolio of the Arts Endowment."

Over the next 30 years, Spellman would play an important role in many major Arts Endowment programs, most notably the NEA Jazz Masters Fellowships. Spellman remembered, "In 1975, when I came here, jazz was in about the same position as Expansion Arts. Most of the arts establishments simply would not touch it . . . On the National Council on the Arts the attitude, unfortunately, was the same. Billy Taylor and I had many heated arguments with Council members about giving some parity to jazz with classical music in the guidelines of the Arts Endowment. David Baker had many arguments with several Council members, including, of course, the late [pianist and cultural critic] Sam Lipman, again about jazz as a fine arts form. And, of course, David was able to change Sam's point of view." Spellman also summarized the contribution of the Arts Endowment by commenting that after the passage of 30 years, "we see a much, much more inclusive arts world today than we had in 1975."

Hanks's Accomplishments

Hanks's greatest accomplishment was that of bringing more federal money for the arts to more communities in the United States than ever before. Her success in doing so—and the popularity of an "arts-for-all-Americans" vision for the agency—

may be measured by the Endowment's growing budget in the eight years under Hanks, which increased by 1400 percent! In 1978, the last year funded under her chairmanship, the budget stood at $123.8 million. To appreciate the scope of the increase, consider that $124 million dollars in 1978 is equivalent to approximately $378 million dollars in 2005. Moreover, the 1978 funding served a total population in the United States that was three-quarters the size of the 2005 population (223 million compared to 298 million).

Grants were offered in many new areas, including aid to exhibitions, crafts fellowships and workshops, apprenticeships, and a fellowship program for art critics, which was certainly a novelty. She provided support for the final work of the great American muralist Thomas Hart Benton, who died in 1975. *The Sources of Country Music*, a monumental painting, was commissioned for Nashville's Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum, with the grant application submitted by Bill Ivey, who would become NEA chairman more than 20 years later.

With the end of the Ford administration, and the election of President Jimmy Carter, Hanks's service with the Arts Endowment concluded. Straight recalled that she had "a sense that she was accepted by the incoming administration, but the sense was illusory." When Hanks sought to influence President Carter, her attempt, according to Straight, was too personal and direct—she found a way to meet the new chief executive one-on-one, little realizing that he was a man who preferred contact through his staff. President Carter understood that she expected to be reappointed to head the Arts Endowment, but he did not even request that she continue until her successor could take her place. According to Straight's White House sources, "She was plainly shocked and taken aback."

In retrospect, Carter's decision established what some view as an unfortunate precedent. The chairman of the Arts Endowment could have been a multi-administration position as in the case of the Librarian of Congress. James H. Billington, the current Librarian, has served since 1987, through the presidencies of Ronald Reagan, George H. W. Bush, William J. Clinton, and George W. Bush. But after President Carter's decision, the chairmanship of the Arts Endowment became a political appointment.

But the humane example of Nancy Hanks's leadership lived on well beyond her tenure, and the devotion she inspired was enduring. Original National Council member R. Philip Hanes, Jr. provides a telling sign of her commitment: "When Nancy discovered she had cancer, we all knew that she was not well; but she would take no one at all into her confidence . . . She was without question one of the

President Jimmy Carter with NEA Chairman Nancy Hanks in August 1977. (Official White House photo)

strongest and ablest human beings I have ever known and one of the most giving and selfless. Even while she was dying she visited almost daily our council member, Duke Ellington, who was dying in the hospital."

Three weeks after her death, President Reagan requested Congress to name the Old Post Office complex the Nancy Hanks Center. On April 19, 1983, the building was dedicated as the new home of the Arts Endowment, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, the Institute of Museum Services, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

Appendices

National Endowment for the Arts Chairmen

Roger Stevens
1965–69

Nancy Hanks
1969–77

Livingston Biddle
1977–81

Frank Hodsoll
1981–89

John Frohnmayer
1989–92

Jane Alexander
1993–97

Bill Ivey
1997–2001

Michael Hammond
2002

Dana Gioia
2003–present

National Council on the Arts

Maurice Abravanel
1970–76

Kurt Herbert Adler
1980–87

Margo Albert
1980–85

Marian Anderson
1966–72

Martina Arroyo
1976–82

Elizabeth Ashley
1965–66

William Bailey
1992–97

David Baker
1987–94

James Ballinger
2004–present

James Barnett
1980

Thomas Bergin
1979–84

Robert Berks
1969–70

Phyllis P. Berney
1986–91

Leonard Bernstein
1965–68

Theodore Bikel
1978–82

Anthony A. Bliss
1965–68

Sally Brayley Bliss
1987–94

Angus Bowmer
1974–79

Willard Boyd
1976–82

David Brinkley
1965

Nina Brock
1987–1994

Richard F. Brown
1972–78

Trisha Brown
1994–97

Albert Bush-Brown
1965–70

Philip Brunelle
1992–96

Henry J. Cauthen
1972–78

Norman B. Champ, Jr.
1979–86

Van Cliburn
1974–80

Don V. Cogman
2002–present

Mary D. Costa
2003–present

Phyllis Curtin
1988–91

Jean Dalrymple
1968–74

Gordon Davidson
1999–2004

Patrick Davidson
1996–2002

Hal C. Davis
1976–78

Kenneth Dayton
1970–76

Agnes de Mille
1965–66

Katharine Cramer DeWitt
2002–present

Rene d'Harnoncourt
1965–68

J. C. Dickinson, Jr.
1976–82

Richard C. Diebenkorn
1966–69

C. Douglas Dillon
1982–89

Allen Drury
1982–88

Charles Eames
1970–76

Clint Eastwood
1972–78

William Eells
1976–82

Duke Ellington
1968–74

Ralph Ellison
1965–66

Paul Engle
1965–70

Joseph Epstein
1985–94

Terry Evans
1996–2002

Leonard L. Farber
1980

Ronald Feldman
1994–99

O'Neil Ford
1968–74

William P. Foster
1996–98

Helen Frankenthaler
1985–92

Martin Friedman
1979–84

Makoto Fujimura
2003–present

Hsin-Ming Fung
2001–02

Robert Garfias
1987–96

David H. Gelernter
2002–present

Virginia B. Gerity
1970–72

Roy M. Goodman
1989–96

Martha Graham
1985–87

Barbara Grossman
1994–99

Sandra Hale
1980

Donald Hall
1991–97

Lawrence Halprin
1966–72

Marvin Hamlisch
1989

R. Philip Hanes, Jr.
1965–70

Hugh Hardy
1992–97

Joy Harjo
1998–2003

Mel Harris
1988–91

Huntington Hartford
1969–72

Rev. Gilbert Hartke, O.P.
1965–66

Helen Hayes
1966–69; 1971–72

Peter deCourcy Hero
1991–96

Charlton Heston
1966–72

Ronnie Heyman
1996–2002

Margaret Hillis
1985–91

Mark Hofflund
2005–present

Celeste Holm
1982–88

Richard Hunt
1968–74

Marta Istomin
1991–97

Arthur I. Jacobs
1981–87

Judith Jamison
1972–77

Kenneth M. Jarin
1994–98

Colleen Jennings-Roggensack
1994–97

Speight Jenkins
1996–2000

Robert Joffrey
1980–1987

Bob Johnson
1987–94

James Earl Jones
1970–76

Herman David Kenin
1965–68

M. Ray Kingston
1985–92

Ardis Krainik
1987–94

Eleanor Lambert
1965–66

Jacob Lawrence
1978–84

Warner Lawson
1965–68

Raymond J. Learsy
1982–88

N. Harper Lee
1966–72

Erich Leinsdorf
1980–84

Nathan Leventhal
1997–2004

Harvey Lichtenstein
1987–94

Samuel Lipman
1982–88

Teresa Lozano Long
2002–present

Bernard Lopez
1979–84

Wendy Luers
1988–96

Talbot MacCarthy
1985–91

Roger Mandle
1989–96

Jimilu Mason
1966–72

Marsha Mason
1997–2003

James McBride
2004–05

Louise McClure
1991–97

Maribeth Walton McGinley
2002–present

Wallace D. McRae
1996–98

Robert Merrill
1968–74

Arthur Mitchell
1987–94

Toni Morrison
1980–87

Carlos Moseley
1985–91

Jacob Neusner
1985–90

Leo J. O'Donovan, S. J.
1994–98

Gregory Peck
1965–66; 1968–74

I.M. Pei
1980–87

William L. Pereira
1965–68

Jorge M. Perez
1994–98

Roberta Peters
1991–97

Jerry Pinkney
2003–present

Sidney Poitier
1966–70

Earl A. Powell, III
2003

Harold Prince
1976–82

Lloyd Richards
1985–92

Jerome Robbins
1974–79

James D. Robertson
1972–78

Cleo Parker Robinson
1999–2004

Kevin Roche
1989

Richard Rodgers
1965–68

Lida Rogers
1980–87

Maureene Rogers
1978–84

Deedie Potter Rose
2002–present

James Rosenquist
1978–84

Judith Rubin
1994–2002

Rosalind Russell
1972–76

George Schaefer
1982–88

Franklin Schaffner
1976–82

Thomas Schippers
1974–76

Gunther Schuller
1974–80

Gerard Schwarz
2004–present

Rudolf Serkin
1968–74

George Seybolt
1974–80

Robert Shaw
1979–84

Beverly Sills
1970–76

David Smith
1965

Oliver Smith
1965–70

Joan Specter
1998–2003

Robert Stack
1982–88

John Steinbeck
1966–68

Isaac Stern
1965–70

Richard Stern
1996–2002

George Stevens, Sr.
1965–70

Ruth Carter Stevenson
1969–70

Jocelyn Levi Straus
1988–96

William E. Strickland, Jr.
1991–97

Geraldine Stutz
1976–82

James Johnson Sweeney
1965–68

Billy Taylor
1972–78

Terry Teachout
2004–present

Luis Valdez
1996–2003

William Van Allen
1982–88

Edward Villella
1968–74

E. Leland Webber
1970–76

Harry Weese
1974–80

Donald Weismann
1966–72

Eudora Welty
1972–78

Dolores Wharton
1974–80

George White
1992–97

Nancy White
1966–72

Anne Potter Wilson
1972–78

Robert Wise
1970–76

Otto Wittmann
1985–94

Catherine Yi-yu Cho Woo
1991–96

Townsend D. Wolfe, III
1996–2002

Karen Lias Wolff
2003–present

James Wood
1985–94

Jessie Woods
1979–85

Rachael Worby
1994–98

James Wyeth
1972–78

Rosalind W. Wyman
1979–85

Minoru Yamasaki
1965–69

Stanley Young
1965–66

Ex Officio Congressional Members

Sen. Robert Bennett
2003–present

Sen. Susan M. Collins
1998

Sen. Mike DeWine
1999–present

Sen. Richard Durbin
1998–2002

Sen. Patrick Leahy
2005–present

Sen. Harry Reid
2003–04

Sen. Jeff Sessions
1998–2003

Rep. Cass Ballenger
1998–2004

Rep. John T. Doolittle
1998

Rep. Nita M. Lowey
1998–2000

Rep. Betty McCollum
2003–present

Rep. Howard "Buck" McKeon
2003–present

Rep. Pat Tiberi
2005–present

Medal of Arts Recipients

NOTE: Recipients are listed alphabetically, artists first and then arts patrons.

2005

Louis Auchincloss
Writer

James DePreist
Conductor

Paquito D'Rivera
Jazz musician, composer, writer

Robert Duvall
Actor

Ollie Johnston
Film animator and artist

Wynton Marsalis
Trumpeter, composer, Jazz at Lincoln Center artistic director

Dolly Parton
Singer, songwriter

Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts
School of fine arts/museum

Tina Ramirez
Choreographer, Ballet Hispanico artistic director

Leonard Garment
Arts patron and advocate

2004

Ray Bradbury
Writer

Carlisle Floyd
Opera composer

Frederick Hart
Sculptor

Anthony Hecht
Poet

John Ruthven
Wildlife artist

Vincent Scully
Architectural historian and educator

Twyla Tharp
Choreographer

Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
Philanthropic foundation

2003

Austin City Limits
PBS television program

Beverly Cleary
Writer

Rafe Esquith
Arts educator

Suzanne Farrell
Dancer, choreographer, company director

Buddy Guy
Blues musician

Ron Howard
Actor, director, writer, producer

Mormon Tabernacle Choir
Choral group

Leonard Slatkin
Conductor

George Strait
Country singer, songwriter

Tommy Tune
Dancer, actor, choreographer

2002

Florence Knoll Bassett
Designer

Trisha Brown
Artistic director, choreographer

Philippe de Montebello
Museum director

Uta Hagen
Actress, drama teacher

Lawrence Halprin
Landscape architect

Al Hirschfeld
Artist, illustrator

George Jones
Singer, songwriter

Ming Cho Lee
Theater designer

William "Smokey" Robinson
Songwriter, musician

2001

Alvin Ailey Dance Foundation
Modern dance company and school

Rudolfo Anaya
Writer

Johnny Cash
Singer, songwriter

Kirk Douglas
Actor, producer

Helen Frankenthaler
Painter

Judith Jamison
Artistic director, choreographer, dancer

Yo-Yo Ma
Cellist

Mike Nichols
Director, producer

2000

Maya Angelou
Poet, writer

Eddy Arnold
Country singer

Mikhail Baryshnikov
Dancer, director

Benny Carter
Jazz musician

Chuck Close
Painter

Horton Foote
Playwright, screenwriter

National Public Radio, Cultural Programming Division
Broadcaster

Claes Oldenburg
Sculptor

Itzhak Perlman
Violinist

Harold Prince
Theater director, producer

Barbra Streisand
Singer, filmmaker

Lewis Manilow
Arts patron

1999

Aretha Franklin
Singer

Michael Graves
Architect, designer

Odetta
Singer, music historian

The Juilliard School
Performing arts school

Norman Lear
Producer, writer, director, advocate

Rosetta LeNoire
Actress, producer

Harvey Lichtenstein
Arts administrator

Lydia Mendoza
Singer

George Segal
Sculptor

Maria Tallchief
Ballerina

Irene Diamond
Arts patron

1998

Jacques d'Amboise
Dancer, choreographer, educator

Antoine "Fats" Domino
Rock 'n' roll pianist, singer

Ramblin' Jack Elliott
Folk singer, songwriter

Frank Gehry
Architect

Barbara Handman
Arts advocate

Agnes Martin
Visual artist

Gregory Peck
Actor

Roberta Peters
Opera singer

Philip Roth
Writer

Steppenwolf Theatre Company
Arts organization

Gwen Verdon
Actress, dancer

Sara Lee Corporation
Corporate arts patron

1997

Louise Bourgeois
Sculptor

Betty Carter
Jazz vocalist

Daniel Urban Kiley
Landscape architect

Angela Lansbury
Actress

James Levine
Conductor

MacDowell Colony
Artists' colony

Tito Puente
Latin percussionist, musician

Jason Robards
Actor

Edward Villella
Dancer, choreographer

Doc Watson
Bluegrass guitarist, vocalist

Agnes Gund
Arts patron

1996

Edward Albee
Playwright

Boys Choir of Harlem
Performing arts youth group

Sarah Caldwell
Opera conductor

Harry Callahan
Photographer

Zelda Fichandler
Theater director, founder

Eduardo "Lalo" Guerrero
Composer, musician

Lionel Hampton
Musician, bandleader

Bella Lewitzky
Dancer, choreographer, teacher

Robert Redford
Actor, director, producer

Maurice Sendak
Writer, illustrator, designer

Stephen Sondheim
Composer, lyricist

Vera List
Arts patron

1995

Licia Albanese
Opera singer

Gwendolyn Brooks
Poet

Ossie Davis
Actor

Ruby Dee
Actress

David Diamond
Composer

James Ingo Freed
Architect

Bob Hope
Entertainer

Roy Lichtenstein
Painter, sculptor

Arthur Mitchell
Dancer, choreographer

Bill Monroe
Bluegrass musician

Urban Gateways
Arts education organization

Iris and B. Gerald Cantor
Arts patrons

1994

Harry Belafonte
Singer, actor

Dave Brubeck
Pianist, bandleader, composer

Celia Cruz
Singer

Dorothy DeLay
Violin teacher

Julie Harris
Actress

Erick Hawkins
Dance choreographer

Gene Kelly
Dancer, singer, actor

Pete Seeger
Composer, lyricist, singer

Wayne Thiebaud
Artist

Richard Wilbur
Poet, translator

Young Audiences
Arts presenter

Catherine Filene Shouse
Arts patron

1993

Cab Calloway
Singer, bandleader

Ray Charles
Singer, musician

Bess Lomax Hawes
Folklorist

Stanley Kunitz
Poet

Robert Merrill
Opera singer

Arthur Miller
Playwright

Robert Rauschenberg
Artist

Lloyd Richards
Theater director

William Styron
Writer

Paul Taylor
Dancer, choreographer

Billy Wilder
Movie director, writer

Walter and Leonore Annenberg
Arts patrons

1992

Marilyn Horne
Opera singer

James Earl Jones
Actor

Allan Houser
Sculptor

Minnie Pearl
Grand Ole Opry performer

Robert Saudek
Television producer, Museum of Broadcasting founding director

Earl Scruggs
Banjo player

Robert Shaw
Conductor, choral director

Billy Taylor
Jazz pianist

Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown
Architects

Robert Wise
Director, producer

AT&T
Corporate arts patron

Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund
Foundation arts patron

1991

Maurice Abravanel
Music director, conductor

Roy Acuff
Singer, songwriter

Pietro Belluschi
Architect

J. Carter Brown
Museum director

Charles "Honi" Coles
Tap dancer

John O. Crosby
Opera director, conductor, administrator

Richard Diebenkorn
Painter

Kitty Carlisle Hart
Actress, singer, arts administrator

Pearl Primus
Choreographer, anthropologist

Isaac Stern
Violinist

R. Philip Hanes, Jr.
Arts patron

Texaco Inc.
Corporate arts patron

1990

George Francis Abbott
Actor, playwright, producer, director

Hume Cronyn
Actor

Merce Cunningham
Choreographer, dance company director

Jasper Johns
Painter, sculptor

Jacob Lawrence
Painter

Riley "B.B." King
Blues musician

Ian McHarg
Landscape architect

Beverly Sills
Opera singer, director

Jessica Tandy
Actress

David Lloyd Kreeger
Arts patron

Harris & Carroll Sterling Masterson
Arts patrons

Southeastern Bell Corporation
Corporate arts patron

1989

Leopold Adler
Preservationist

Katherine Dunham
Dancer, choreographer

Alfred Eisenstaedt
Photographer

Martin Friedman
Museum director

John Birks "Dizzy" Gillespie
Jazz trumpeter

Walker Kirtland Hancock
Sculptor

Vladimir Horowitz
Pianist

Czeslaw Milosz
Writer

Robert Motherwell
Painter

John Updike
Writer

Leigh Gerdine
Arts patron

Dayton Hudson Corporation
Corporate arts patron

1988

Saul Bellow
Writer

Sydney J. Freedberg
Art historian, curator

Helen Hayes
Actress

Gordon Parks
Photographer, film director

I.M. Pei
Architect

Jerome Robbins
Choreographer

Rudolf Serkin
Pianist

Roger L. Stevens
Arts administrator

Virgil Thomson
Composer, music critic

(Mrs. Vincent) Brooke Astor
Arts patron

Francis Goelet
Music patron

Obert C. Tanner
Arts patron

1987

Romare Bearden
Painter

Ella Fitzgerald
Singer

Howard Nemerov
Poet, writer, scholar

Alwin Nikolais
Dancer, choreographer

Isamu Noguchi
Sculptor

William Schuman
Composer

Robert Penn Warren
Writer, poet

J. W. Fisher
Arts patron

Dr. Armand Hammer
Arts patron

Mr. and Mrs. Sydney Lewis
Arts patrons

1986

Marian Anderson
Opera singer

Frank Capra
Film director

Aaron Copland
Composer

Willem de Kooning
Painter

Agnes de Mille
Choreographer

Eva Le Gallienne
Actress, author

Alan Lomax
Folklorist, scholar

Lewis Mumford
Philosopher, literary critic

Eudora Welty
Writer

Dominique de Menil
Arts patron

Exxon Corporation
Corporate arts patron

Seymour H. Knox
Arts patron

1985

Elliott Carter, Jr.
Composer

Ralph Ellison
Writer

Jose Ferrer
Actor

Martha Graham
Dancer, choreographer

Louise Nevelson
Sculptor

Georgia O'Keeffe
Painter

Leontyne Price
Opera singer

Dorothy Buffum Chandler
Arts patron

Hallmark Cards, Inc.
Corporate arts patron

Lincoln Kirstein
Arts patron

Paul Mellon
Arts patron

Alice Tully
Arts patron

NOTE: In 1983, prior to the official establishment of the National Medal of Arts, the following artists and patrons received a medal from President Reagan at a White House luncheon arranged by the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities.

ARTISTS

Philip Johnson

Czeslaw Milosz

Frank Stella

Luis Valdez

Frederica Von Stade

Pinchas Zukerman

PATRONS

The Cleveland Foundation

The Dayton Hudson Foundation

Elma Lewis

James Michener*

Philip Morris, Inc.

The Texaco Philanthropic Foundation

* considered a patron

NEA Jazz Masters

2006

Ray Barretto
Tony Bennett
Bob Brookmeyer
Chick Corea
Buddy DeFranco
Freddie Hubbard
John Levy

2005

Kenny Burrell
Paquito D'Rivera
Slide Hampton
Shirley Horn
Artie Shaw
Jimmy Smith
George Wein

2004

Jim Hall
Chico Hamilton
Herbie Hancock
Luther Henderson
Nat Hentoff
Nancy Wilson

2003

Jimmy Heath
Elvin Jones
Abbey Lincoln

2002

Frank Foster
Percy Heath
McCoy Tyner

2001

John Lewis
Jackie McLean
Randy Weston

2000

David Baker
Donald Byrd
Marian McPartland

1999

Dave Brubeck
Art Farmer
Joe Henderson

1998

Ron Carter
James Moody
Wayne Shorter

1997

Billy Higgins
Milt Jackson
Anita O'Day

1996

Tommy Flanagan
Benny Golson
J.J. Johnson

1995

Ray Brown
Roy Haynes
Horace Silver

1994

Louie Bellson
Ahmad Jamal
Carmen McRae

1993

Jon Hendricks
Milt Hinton
Joe Williams

1992

Betty Carter
Dorothy Donegan
Harry "Sweets" Edison

1991

Danny Barker
Buck Clayton
Andy Kirk
Clark Terry

1990

George Russell
Cecil Taylor
Gerald Wilson

1989

Barry Harris
Hank Jones
Sarah Vaughan

1988

Art Blakey
Lionel Hampton
Billy Taylor

1987

Cleo Brown
Melba Liston
Jay McShann

1986

Benny Carter
Dexter Gordon
Teddy Wilson

1985

Gil Evans
Ella Fitzgerald
Jonathan "Jo" Jones

1984

Ornette Coleman
Miles Davis
Max Roach

1983

Count Basie
Kenneth Clarke
Sonny Rollins

1982

Roy Eldridge
Dizzy Gillespie
Sun Ra

NEA National Heritage Fellowships

2005

Eldrid Skjold Arntzen
Norwegian American rosemaler
Watertown, CT

Earl Barthé
Creole building artisan
New Orleans, LA

Chuck Brown
African American musical innovator
Brandywine, MD

Janette Carter
Appalachian musician, advocate
Hiltons, VA

Michael Doucet
Cajun fiddler, composer, and bandleader
Lafayette, LA

Jerry Grcevich
Tamburitza musician, prim player
North Huntingdon, PA

Grace Henderson Nez
Navajo weaver
Ganado, AZ

Wanda Jackson
Early country, rockabilly, and gospel singer
Oklahoma City, OK

Herminia Albarrán Romero
Paper–cutting artist
San Francisco, CA

Beyle Schaechter-Gottesman
Yiddish singer, poet, songwriter
Bronx, NY

Albertina Walker
Gospel singer
Chicago, IL

James Ka'upena Wong
Hawaiian chanter
Waianae, HI

2004

Anjani Ambegaokar
North Indian Kathak dancer
Diamond Bar, CA

Charles "Chuck" T. Campbell
Sacred steel guitar player
Rochester, NY

Joe Derrane
Irish American button accordionist
Randolph, MA

Jerry Douglas
Dobro player
Nashville, TN

Gerald "Subiyay" Miller
Skokomish oral tradition bearer, carver, basket maker
Shelton, WA

Chum Ngek
Cambodian musician and teacher
Gaithersburg, MD

Milan Opacich
Tamburitza instrument maker
Shererville, IN

Eliseo and Paula Rodriguez
Straw appliqué artists
Santa Fe, NM

Koko Taylor
Blues musician
Country Club Hills, IL

Yuqin Wang and Zhengli Xu
Chinese rod puppeteers
Aloha, OR

2003

Jesus Arriada
San Francisco, CA

Johnny Curutchet
South San Francisco, CA

Martin Goicoechea
Rock Springs, WY

Jesus Goni
Reno, NV

Basque (Bertsolari) Poets

Rosa Elena Egipciaco
Puerto Rican Mundillo (bobbin lace) maker
New York, NY

Agnes "Oshanee" Kenmille
Salish beadworker and regalia maker
Ronan, MT

Norman Kennedy
Weaver, singer, storyteller
Marshfield, VT

Roberto and Lorenzo Martínez
Hispanic musicians
Albuquerque, NM

Norma Miller
African American dancer, choreographer
Las Vegas, NV

Carmencristina Moreno
Mexican American singer, composer, teacher
Fresno, CA

Ron Poast
Hardanger fiddle maker
Black Earth, WI

Felipe and Joseph Ruak
Carolinian stick dance leaders
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

Manoochehr Sadeghi
Persian santur player
Sherman Oaks, CA

Nicholas Toth
Diving helmet designer and builder
Tarpon Springs, FL

2002

Ralph Blizard
Old-time fiddler
Blountville, TN

Loren Bommelyn
Tolowa tradition bearer
Crescent City, CA

Kevin Burke
Irish fiddler
Portland, Ore.

Rose and Francis Cree
Ojibwe basketmakers, storytellers
Dunseith, N.D.

Luderin Darbone and Edwin Duhon
Cajun fiddler and accordionist
Sulphur, La./Westlake, La.

Nadim Dlaikan
Lebanese nye reed flute player
Southgate, MI

David "Honeyboy" Edwards
Blues guitarist, singer
Chicago, IL

Flory Jagoda
Sephardic musician, composer
Falls Church, VA

Clara Neptune Keezer
Passamaquoddy basketmaker
Perry, ME

Bob McQuillen
Contra dance musician, composer
Peterborough, NH

Jean Ritchie
Appalachian musician, songwriter, cultural activist
Port Washington, NY and Viper, KY

Domingo "Mingo" Saldivar
Conjunto accordionist
San Antonio, TX

Losang Samten
Tibetan sand mandala painter
Philadelphia, PA

2001

Celestino Avilés
Santero
Orocovis, Puerto Rico

Mozell Benson
African American quilter
Opelika, AL

Wilson "Boozoo" Chavis
Creole zydeco accordionist
Lake Charles, LA

Hazel Dickens
Appalachian singer, songwriter
Washington, DC and Montcalm, WV

Evalena Henry
Apache basketweaver
Peridot, AZ

Peter Kyvelos
Oud maker
Bedford, MA

João "João Grande" Olivera dos Santos
Capoeira Angola master
New York, NY

Eddie Pennington
Thumbpicking-style guitarist
Princeton, KY

Qi Shu Fang
Beijing Opera performer
Woodhaven, NY

Seiichi Tanaka
Taiko drummer and dojo founder
San Francisco, CA

Dorothy Trumpold
Rug weaver
East Amana, IA

Fred Tsoodle
Kiowa sacred song leader
Mountain View, OK

Joseph Wilson
Folklorist, advocate, presenter
Silver Spring, MD and
Trade, TN

2000

Bounxou Chanthraphone
Laotian weaver
Brooklyn Park, MN

The Dixie Hummingbirds
African American gospel quartet
Philadelphia, PA

Felipe García Villamil
Afro-Cuban drummer/ santero
Los Angeles, CA

José González
Hammock weaver
San Sebastián, PR

Nettie Jackson
Klickitat basketmaker
White Swan, WA

Santiago Jiménez, Jr.
Tejano accordionist, singer
San Antonio, TX

Genoa Keawe
Native Hawaiian singer, ukulele player
Honolulu, HI

Frankie Manning
Lindy hop dancer, choreographer, teacher
Corona, NY

Joe Willie "Pinetop" Perkins
Blues piano player
La Porte, IN

Konstantinos Pilarinos
Orthodox Byzantine icon woodcarver
Astoria, NY

Chris Strachwitz
Record producer and label founder
El Cerrito, CA

Dorothy Thompson
Weaver
Davis, WV

Don Walser
Western singer, guitarist
Austin, TX

1999

Frisner Augustin
Haitian drummer
Brooklyn, NY

Lila Greengrass Blackdeer
Ho-Chunk black ash basketmaker, needleworker
Black River Falls, WI

Shirley Caesar
African American gospel singer
Durham, NC

Alfredo Campos
Horse-hair hitcher
Federal Way, WA

Mary Louise Defender Wilson
Dakotah-Hidatsa traditionalist, storyteller
Shields, ND

James "Jimmy Slyde" Godbolt
Tap dancer
Hanson, MA

Ulysses "Uly" Goode
Western Mono basketmaker
North Fork, CA

Bob Holt
Ozark fiddler
Ava, MO

Zakir Hussain
North Indian master tabla drummer
San Anselmo, CA

Elliott "Ellie" Mannette
Steel pan builder, tuner, player
Morgantown, WV

Mick Moloney
Irish musician
Philadelphia, PA

Eudokia Sorochaniuk
Ukrainian weaver, textile artist
Pennsauken, NJ

Ralph W. Stanley
Master boatbuilder
Southwest Harbor, ME

1998

Apsara Ensemble
Cambodian traditional dancers and musicians
Reston, VA and Fort Washington, MD

Eddie Blazonczyk
Polish American musician, bandleader
Bridgeview, IL

Dale Calhoun
Anglo-American boat builder
Tiptonville, TN

Bruce Caesar
Sac and Fox-Pawnee German silversmith
Anadarko, OK

Antonio "Tony" De La Rosa
Tejano conjunto accordionist
Riviera, TX

Epstein Brothers
Jewish Klezmer musicians
Tamarac, FL

Sophia George
Yakama-Colville beadworker
Gresham, OR

Nadjeschda Overgaard
Danish American Hardanger needleworker
Kimballton, IA

Harilaos Papapostolou
Greek Byzantine chanter
Potomac, MD

Roebuck "Pops" Staples
African American gospel and blues musician
Dolton, IL

Claude "The Fiddler" Williams
African American swing fiddler
Kansas City, MO

1997

Edward Babb
Shout band leader
Jamaica, NY

Charles Brown
Blues pianist, composer
Berkeley, CA

Gladys LeBlanc Clark
Cajun spinner, weaver
Duson, LA

Georgia Harris
Catawba potter
Atlanta, GA

Wen-yi Hua
Chinese Kunqu opera singer
Arcadia, CA

Ali Akbar Khan
North Indian sarod player, raga composer
San Anselmo, CA

Ramón José López
Santero, metalsmith
Santa Fe, NM

Jim and Jesse McReynolds
Bluegrass musicians
Gallatin, TN

Phong Nguyen
Vietnamese musician, scholar
Kent, OH

Hystercine Rankin
African American quilter
Lorman, MS

Francis Whitaker
Blacksmith, ornamental ironworker
Carbondale, CO

1996

Obbo Addy
Ghanian American drummer
Portland, OR

Betty Pisio Christenson
Ukranian American egg decorator
Suring, WY

Paul Dahlin
Swedish American fiddler
Minneapolis, MN

Juan Gutiérrez
Puerto Rican drummer
New York, NY

Solomon and Richard Ho'opi'i
Hawaiian singers
Pukalani and Wailuku, HI

Will Keys
Appalachian banjo player
Gray, TN

Joaquin "Jack" Lujan
Chamorro blacksmith
Barrigada, GU

Eva McAdams
Shoshone regalia maker
Fort Washakie, WY

John Mealing and
Cornelius Wright, Jr.
African-American railroad worksong singers
Birmingham, AL

Vernon Owens
Stoneware potter
Seagrove, NC

Dolly Spencer
Inupiat dollmaker
Homer, AK

1995

Bao Mo-Li
Chinese American jing erhu player
Flushing, NY

Mary Holiday Black
Navajo basketweaver
Mexican Hat, UT

Lyman Enloe
Old-time fiddler
Lee's Summit, MO

Donny Golden
Irish American stepdancer
Brooklyn, NY

Wayne Henderson
Luthier, musician
Mouth of Wilson, VA

Bea Ellis Hensley
Blacksmith
Spruce Pine, NC

Nathan Jackson
Tlingit Alaska Native woodcarver, metalsmith, dancer
Ketchikan, AK

Danongan Kalanduyan
Filipino American kulintang musician
San Francisco, CA

Robert Lockwood, Jr.
African American delta blues guitarist
Cleveland, OH

Israel "Cachao" Lopez
Afro-Cuban bassist, composer, bandleader
Miami, FL

Nellie Star Boy Menard
Lakota Sioux quiltmaker
Rosebud, SD

Buck Ramsey
Cowboy poet, singer
Amarillo, TX

1994

Liz Carroll
Irish American fiddler
Chicago, IL

Clarence Fountain & the Blind Boys
African American gospel singers
Atlanta, GA

Mary Mitchell Gabriel
Passamaquoddy Native American basketmaker
Princeton, ME

Johnny Gimble
Western swing fiddler
Dripping Springs, TX

Frances Varos Graves
Hispanic American colcha embroiderer
Ranchos de Taos, NM

Violet Hilbert
Skagit Native American storyteller
Seattle, WA

Sosei Shizuye Matsumoto
Japanese chado tea ceremony master
Los Angeles, CA

D.L. Menard
Cajun musician, songwriter
Erath, LA

Simon Shaheen
Arab American oud player
Brooklyn, NY

Lily Vorperian
Armenian Marash-style embroiderer
Glendale, CA

Elder Roma Wilson
African American harmonica player
Blue Springs, MS

1993

Santiago Almeida
Conjunto musician
Sunnyside, WA

Kenny Baker
Bluegrass fiddler
Cottontown, TN

Inez Catalon
French Creole singer
Kaplan, LA

Nicholas and Elena Charles
Yupik woodcarver, maskmaker, skinsewer
Bethel, AK

Charles Hankins
Boatbuilder
Lavallette, NJ

Nalani Kanaka'ole and
Pualani Kanaka'ole
Kanahele
Hula masters
Hilo, HI

Everett Kapayou
Mesquakie Native American singer
Tama, IA

McIntosh County Shouters
African American spiritual/shout performers
Townsend, GA

Elmer Miller
Bit and spur maker, silversmith
Nampa, ID

Jack Owens
Blues singer, guitarist
Bentonia, MS

Mone and Vanxay
Saenphimmachak
Lao weaver, needleworker, loommaker
St. Louis, MO

Liang-xing Tang
Chinese American pipa (lute) player
Bayside, NY

1992

Francisco Aguabella
Afro-Cuban drummer
Manhattan Beach, CA

Jerry Brown
Southern stoneware tradition potter
Hamilton, AL

Walker Calhoun
Cherokee musician, dancer, teacher
Cherokee, NC

Clyde Davenport
Appalachian fiddler
Monticello, KY

Belle Deacon
Athabascan basketmaker
Grayling, AK

Nora Ezell
African American quilter
Eutaw, AL

Gerald R. Hawpetoss
Menominee/Potowatomi regalia maker
Milwaukee, WI

Fatima Kuinova
Bukharan Jewish singer
Rego Park, NY

John Yoshio Naka
Bonsai sculptor
Los Angeles, CA

Ng Sheung-Chi
Chinese toissan muk'yu folk singer
New York, NY

Marc Savoy
Cajun accordion maker, musician
Eunice, LA

Othar Turner
African American fife player
Senatobia, MS

T. Viswanathan
South Indian flute master
Middletown, CT

1991

Etta Baker
African American guitarist
Morgantown, NC

George Blake
Hupa-Yurok Native American craftsman
Hoopa, CA

Jack Coen
Irish American flautist
Bronx, NY

Rose Frank
Nez Perce Native American cornhusk weaver
Lapwai, ID

Eduardo "Lalo" Guerrero
Mexican American singer, guitarist, composer
Cathedral City, CA

Khamvong Insixiengmai
Lao Southeast Asian singer
Fresno, CA

Don King
Western saddlemaker
Sheridan, WY

Riley "B.B." King
African American bluesman
Itta Bena, MS/Las Vegas, NV

Esther Littlefieleld
Tlingit regalia maker
Sitka, AK

Seisho "Harry" Nakasone
Okinawan American musician
Honolulu, HI

Irvan Perez
Isleno (Canary Island) singer
Poydras, LA

Morgan Sexton
Appalachian banjo player, singer
Linefork, KY

Nikitas Tsimouris
Greek American bagpipe player
Tarpon Springs, FL

Gussie Wells
African American quilter
Oakland, CA

Arbie Williams
African American quilter
Oakland, CA

Melvin Wine
Appalachian fiddler
Copen, WV

1990

Howard Armstrong
African American string band musician
Detroit, MI

Em Bun
Cambodian silk weaver
Harrisburg, PA

Natividad Cano
Mariachi musician
Monterey Park, CA

Giuseppe and Raffaela DeFranco
Southern Italian musicians and dancers
Belleville, NJ

Maude Kegg
Ojibwe storyteller, craftsman
Onamie, MN

Kevin Locke
Lakota flute player, singer, dancer, storyteller
Mobridge, SD

Marie McDonald
Hawaiian lei maker
Kamuela, HI

Wallace McRae
Cowboy poet
Forsyth, MT

Art Moilanen
Finnish accordionist
Mass City, MI

Emilio Rosado
Woodcarver
Utuado, PR

Robert Spicer
Flatfoot dancer
Dickson, TN

Douglas Wallin
Appalachian ballad singer
Marshall, NC

1989

John Cephas
Piedmont blues guitarist, singer
Woodford, VA

The Fairfield Four
African American a capella gospel singers
Nashville, TN

José Gutiérrez
Mexican Jarocho musician, singer
Norwalk, CA

Richard Avedis Hagopian
Armenian oud player
Visalia, CA

Christy Hengel
German American concertina maker
New Ulm, MN

Vanessa Paukeigope Jennings
Kiowa regalia maker
Anadarko, OK

Ilias Kementzides
Pontic Greek lyra player
Norwalk, CT

Ethel Kvalheim
Norwegian rosemaler
Stoughton, WI

Mabel E. Murphy
Anglo-American quilter
Fulton, MO

LaVaughn E. Robinson
African American tap dancer
Philadelphia, PA

Earl Scruggs
Bluegrass banjo player
Madison, TN

Harry V. Shourds
Wildlife decoy carver
Seaville, NJ

Chesley Goseyun Wilson
Apache fiddle maker
Tucson, AZ

1988

Pedro Ayala
Mexican American accordionist
Donna, TX

Kepka Belton
Czech American egg painter
Ellsworth, KS

Amber Densmore
New England quilter, needleworker
Chelsea, VT

Michael Flatley
Irish American stepdancer
Palos Park, IL

Sister Rosalia Haberl
German American bobbin lacemaker
Hankinson, ND

John Dee Holeman
African American dancer, musician, singer
Durham, NC

Albert "Sunnyland Slim" Luandrew
African American blues pianist, singer
Chicago, IL

Yang Fang Nhu
Hmong weaver, embroiderer
Detroit, MI

Kenny Sidle
Anglo-American fiddler
Newark, OH

Willa Mae Ford Smith
African American gospel singer
St. Louis, MO

Clyde "Kindy" Sproat
Hawaiian cowboy singer, ukulele player
Kapa'au, HI

Arthel "Doc" Watson
Appalachian guitar player, singer
Deep Gap, NC

1987

Juan Alindato
Carnival maskmaker
Ponce, PR

Louis Bashell
Slovenian accordionist, polka master
GreenField, WI

Genoveva Castellanoz
Mexican American corona maker
Nyssa, OR

Thomas Edison "Brownie" Ford
Anglo-Comanche cowboy singer, storyteller
Hebert, LA

Kansuma Fujima
Japanese American dancer
Los Angeles, CA

Claude Joseph Johnson
African American religious singer, orator
Atlanta, GA

Raymond Kane
Hawaiian slack key guitarist, singer
Wai'anae, HI

Wade Mainer
Appalachian banjo picker, singer
Flint, MI

Sylvester McIntosh
Crucian singer, bandleader
St. Croix, VI

Allison "Totie" Montana
Mardi Gras chief, costume maker
New Orleans, LA

Alex Moore, Sr.
African American blues pianist
Dallas, TX

Emilio and Senaida Romero
Hispanic American craftsworkers in tin embroidery
Santa Fe, NM

Newton Washburn
Split ash basketmaker
Littleton, NH

1986

Alfonse "Bois Sec" Ardoin
African American Creole accordionist
Eunice, LA

Earnest Bennett
Anglo-American whittler
Indianapolis, IN

Helen Cordero
Pueblo potter
Cochiti, NM

Sonia Domsch
Czech American bobbin lace maker
Atwood, KS

Canray Fontenot
African American Creole fiddler
Welsh, LA

John Jackson
African American songster, guitarist
Fairfax Station, VA

Peou Khatna
Cambodian court dancer, choreographer
Silver Spring, MD

Valerio Longoria
Mexican American accordionist
San Antonio, TX

Joyce Doc Tate Nevaquaya
Comanche flutist
Apache, OK

Luis Ortega
Hispanic American rawhide worker
Paradise, CA

Ola Belle Reed
Appalachian banjo picker, singer
Rising Sun, MD

Jenny Thlunaut
Tlingit Chilkat blanket weaver
Haines, AK

Nimrod Workman
Appalachian ballad singer
Mascot, TN/Chattaroy, WV

1985

Eppie Archuleta
Hispanic weaver
San Luis Valley, CO

Alice New Holy Blue Legs
Lakota Sioux quill artist
Oglala, SD

Periklis Halkias
Greek clarinetist
Astoria, NY

Jimmy Jausoro
Basque accordionist
Boise, ID

Meali'i Kalama
Hawaiian quilter
Honolulu, HI

Lily May Ledford
Appalachian musician, singer
Lexington, KY

Leif Melgaard
Norwegian woodcarver
Minneapolis, MN

Bua Xou Mua
Hmong musician
Portland, OR

Julio Negrón-Rivera
Puerto Rican instrument maker
Morovis, PR

Glenn Ohrlin
Cowboy singer, storyteller, illustrator
Mountain View, AR

Henry Townsend
Blues musician, songwriter
St. Louis, MO

Horace "Spoons" Williams
Percussionist, poet
Philadelphia, PA

1984

Clifton Chenier
Creole accordionist
Lafayette, LA

Bertha Cook
Knotted bedspread maker
Boone, NC

Joseph Cormier
Cape Breton violinist
Waltham, MA

Elizabeth Cotten
African American songster, guitarist, songwriter
Syracuse, NY

Burlon Craig
Potter
Vale, NC

Albert Fahlbusch
Hammered dulcimer maker and player
Scottsbluff, NE

Janie Hunter
African American singer, storyteller
Johns Island, SC

Mary Jane Manigault
African American seagrass basket maker
Mt. Pleasant, SC

Genevieve Mougin
Lebanese-American lace maker
Bettendorf, IA

Martin Mulvihill
Irish American fiddler
Bronx, NY

Howard "Sandman" Sims
African American tap dancer
New York, NY

Ralph Stanley
Appalachian banjo player, singer
Coeburn, VA

Margaret Tafoya
Santa Clara pueblo potter
Espanola, NM

Dave Tarras
Klezmer clarinetist
Brooklyn, NY

Paul Tiulana
Inupiaq Eskimo maskmaker, dancer, singer
Anchorage, AK

Cleofes Vigil
Hispanic storyteller, singer
San Cristobal, NM

Emily Kau'i Zuttermeister
Hula master
Kaneohe, HI

1983

Sister Mildred Barker
Shaker singer
Poland Springs, ME

Rafael Cepeda
Bomba musician, dancer
Santurce, PR

Ray Hicks
Appalachian storyteller
Banner Elk, NC

Stanley Hicks
Appalachian musician, storyteller, instrument maker
Vilas, NC

John Lee Hooker
Blues guitarist, singer
San Carlos, CA

Mike Manteo
Sicilian marionettist
Staten Island, NY

Narciso Martínez
Accordionist, composer
San Benito, TX

Lanier Meaders
Potter
Cleveland, GA

Almeda Riddle
Ballad singer
Greers Ferry, AR

Simon St. Pierre
French American fiddler
Smyrna Mills, ME

Joe Shannon
Irish piper
Chicago, IL

Alex Stewart
Cooper, woodworker
Sneedville, TN

Ada Thomas
Chitimacha basketmaker
Charenton, LA

Lucinda Toomer
African American quilter
Columbus, GA

Lem Ward
Decoy carver, and painter
Crisfield, MD

Dewey Williams
Shape note singer
Ozark, AL

1982

Dewey Balfa
Cajun fiddler
Basile, LA

Joe Heaney
Irish singer
Brooklyn, NY

Tommy Jarrell
Appalachian fiddler
Mt. Airy, NC

Bessie Jones
Georgia Sea Island singer
Brunswick, GA

George López
Santos woodcarver
Cordova, NM

Brownie McGhee
Blues guitarist
Oakland, CA

Hugh McGraw
Shape note singer
Bremen, GA

Lydia Mendoza
Mexican American singer
Houston, TX

Bill Monroe
Bluegrass musician
Nashville, TN

Elijah Pierce
Carver, painter
Columbus, OH

Adam Popovich
Tamburitza musician
Dolton, IL

Georgeann Robinson
Osage ribbonworker
Bartlesville, OK

Duff Severe
Western saddlemaker
Pendleton, OR

Philip Simmons
Ornamental ironworker
Charleston, SC

Sanders "Sonny" Terry
Blues musician
Holliswood, NY

NEA Discipline Directors

NOTE: Information in parentheses denotes all disciplines for which the directors were responsible during their terms.

Arts Education

John Kerr
1969–81

Joe Prince
1981–86

Warren Newman
1987–89

David O'Fallon
1991–92

Doug Herbert
1992–2004

David Steiner
2004–05

Sarah Bainter Cunningham
2005–present

Dance

June Arey
1967–73

Don Anderson
1972–74

Joseph Krakora
1975

Suzanne Weil
1976–77

Rhoda Grauer
1978–81

Nigel Redden
1982–85

Sali Ann Kriegsman
1986–95

Douglas C. Sonntag
1997–present

Design

Paul Spreiregen
1966–70

Bill Lacy
1970–77

Michael Pittas
1978–84

Adele Chatfield-Taylor
1984–88

Randolph McAusland
1989–91

Mina Berryman
1991–93

Samina Quraeshi
1994–97

Mark Robbins
1999–2002

Jeff Speck
2003–present

Expansion Arts

Vantile Whitfield
1971–77

A.B. Spellman
1978–91

Patrice Walker Powell
1991–95

Folk and Traditional Arts

Alan Jabbour
1974–76

Bess Lomax Hawes
1977–92

Daniel Sheehy
1992–2000

Barry Bergey
2001–present

Inter-Arts/ Presenting

Esther Novak
1980–81

Renee Levine
1982–85

Peter Pennekamp
1987–1989

Lenwood Sloan
1990–94

Omus Hirshbein
(Music, Opera, Presenting)
1995–97

Patrice Walker Powell
1997–99

Vanessa Whang
1999–2003

Mario Garcia Durham
2004–present

Literature

Carolyn Kizer
1967–69

Len Randolph
1970–78

David Wilk
1979–81

Frank Conroy
1982–87

Stephen Goodwin
1988–90

Joe David Bellamy
1990–92

Gigi Bradford
1992–97

Cliff Becker
1998–2005

David Kipen
2005–present

Local Arts Agencies

Robert Cannon
1983–87

Richard Huff
1988–91

Diane Mataraza
1992–95

Patrice Walker Powell
1995–present

Museums

Thomas Leavitt
1970–73

John Spencer
1973–77

Tom Freudenheim
1979–82

Andrew Oliver
1983–94

Jennifer Dowley
(Museums, Visual Arts)
1995–99

Saralyn Reece Hardy
(Museums, Visual Arts)
1999–2002

Robert H. Frankel
(Museums, Visual Arts)
2002–present

Music

Frances Taylor
1966–68

Walter Anderson
1968–77

Ezra Laderman
1978–81

Adrian Gnam
1982–84

Edward Birdwell
1984–86

William Vickery
1988–90

D. Antoinette Handy
1990–93

Omus Hirshbein
(Music, Opera, Presenting)
1993–97

Wayne S. Brown
(Music, Opera)
1997–present

Opera/Musical Theater

James Ireland
1979

Edward Corn
1980–81

Ann Francis Darling
1982–83

Patrick J. Smith
1985–89

Tomas C. Hernandez
1991–94

Omus Hirshbein
(Music, Opera, Presenting)
1994–97

Gigi Bolt
(Theater, Musical Theater)
1996–2006

Wayne S. Brown
(Music, Opera)
1997–present

Public Media/ Media Arts

Chloe Aaron
1970–76

Brian O'Doherty
1976–96

Ted Libbey
2002–present

State & Regional Partnerships

Charles Mark
1967–68

Clark Mitze
1968–74

Henry Putsch
1976–79

Anthony Turney
1980–82

Ed Dickey
1988–2004

John E. Ostrout
2004–present

Theater

Ruth Mayleas
1965–77

Arthur Ballet
1978–81

Edward Martenson
1982–86

Robert Marx
1987–89

Jessica Andrews
1989–90

Ben Cameron
1990–92

Keryl McCord
1992–95

Gigi Bolt
(Theater, Musical Theater)
1995–2006

Visual Arts

Henry Geldzahler
1966–69

Brian O'Doherty
1969–76

James Melchert
1977–81

Benny Andrews
1982–84

Richard Andrews
1985–87

Susan Lubowsky
1989–92

Rosalyn Alter
1992–94

Jennifer Dowley
(Museums, Visual Arts)
1994–99

Saralyn Reece Hardy
(Museums, Visual Arts)
1999–2002

Robert H. Frankel
(Museums, Visual Arts)
2002–present

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